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## [MISS WISE MAKES A DISCOVERY.]

### EMERALD AND RUBY,

WITH A  
DIAMOND HEART.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Golden Apple," "Miss Arlingcourt's Will," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XIX.

THE road wound tortuously down the hill, and around a projecting tongue of thickly wooded land, making nearly three times the length, before it reached the open way again, that a straight line, following the brook which babbled merrily through the meadow, would do.

Laurence Lermont had been used by his profession to a quick understanding of these things, and saw at once there was a possibility of his reaching the open space first. There would most likely occur the most damaging collision, if indeed the terrified animals came so far.

With only a vague idea of what he could do to rescue the young lady from her perilous situation, even if he reached the spot in time, he yet urged on his horse to the very top of his speed, and brought him at a flying leap over the wall into the road again. While the poor animal was panting and trembling, Laurence's whole being seemed absorbed in listening. Had he come in time? He shuddered at the very possibility of doubting it!

The next moment answered him. For a dashing, tearing noise, the sound of clattering hoofs, grew more and more distinct coming out of the forest road. The young man set his lips grimly, and cast a quick glance around him. He must stop the carriage, and save Maude Kyrie! But how? His flaming eyes seemed to demand an answer of the inanimate things around. And that instant the needed suggestion seemed to come.

The road was narrow, with tall trees growing inside the wall which parted it from the fields. Just before him they were close set, and the space gave

scarcely passage for two vehicles. Two tall, strong young oaks stood like a sort of gateway. If he could turn the horses there they would be wedged in, secure from dragging the carriage further. He stooped low, seized a dead branch that lay on the ground, and wheeled his horse across the track, leaving only the outlet towards the oaks. On they came, the carriage splintered, dropping down on one side, two wheels with shattered spokes, wreck, and yet holding together wonderfully. Laurence knew the forlorn hope it was, and the terrible danger for himself as well as for her. But he held his trembling horse with one iron hand, and sat firm, the outstretched branch in the other. He did not wave it, he did not shout, but just blocked up the way, as a stone Centaur might have done.

The flying animals quailed a moment, snorted, and turned, as he had hoped and prayed they would. Another moment they were standing, shaking in every limb, but held firm as in a vice, the carriage on one side, and they upon the other.

Laurence leaped down, leaving his horse to dash whinneying back on the road whence it had come, and seized upon those which held the wrecked carriage. It was needless to secure them from struggling and kicking. His knife freed them as speedily as might be. And then, with a heart that hardly seemed to throb, he approached the carriage, which had fallen over on one side. If she was there, alive, why had there come no sound? He opened the door; the torn fragments of her silken skirt fell down fluttering to his feet as he did so. There she lay, on the floor of the carriage. Her loose, dishevelled hair had fallen over her face, so that he could not see it, but the tiny ear looked as cold and white as marble, the gloved hands were clenched together.

He gathered her up in his arms, and ran with her down the road in the direction of her friends, half beside himself with the fear that she had really died of fright. Old Peter was the first he met. The poor fellow gave a great howl of anguish.

"Dead! dead! my angel mistress dead! then I will die too."

"It may be only a faint; I want to get her quickly to the brook. See if the gentlemen have either to them wine or brandy. Waste no time, but run to meet them."

And Laurence himself hurried onward until he saw the brook on the other side, when he put her over, and laid her gently on the grass.

One fair arm had a cruel bruise, otherwise he could detect no injury. He came speedily with his hat dripping with water, and was kneeling before her, chafing at the arms since he could not withdraw the kid gloves, when Mr. Kyrie, breathless, and pallid with fear and grief, came hurrying to him, followed by faithful Peter. In a moment more the whole group of gentlemen had gathered around.

Laurence readily resigned his charge to her father's care, saying hopefully:

"It is only a faint; you can detect a pulse. If she can only swallow a little brandy it will all be right."

Ten minutes after she opened her eyes, stared vacantly a moment, and then burst into tears, and hid her face on her father's shoulder.

"My darling, my treasure, my precious child!" ejaculated Mr. Kyrie, in deep agitation; "may I never cease to be grateful for Heaven's mercy. You are safe, Maude."

She raised her head and looked around slowly until her eye found Laurence.

"He risked his own life to save me. I kept steady and brave, ready for any chance to escape, though that cruel door was closed upon me," she murmured. "I kept my senses, until I saw him there facing death to save me. I must have fainted then, for the last I saw he was there on the horse, blocking the way."

Mr. Kyrie held her close, but he looked over to the young man with glistening eyes.

"God bless you! You shall never repeat your brave effort, this heroic deed."

Laurence, exceedingly uncomfortable at this display of gratitude, only bowed, and stammered:

"I think the coachman was hurt—ought not some

one to be looking after him—and the horses? I will go and see what I can do."

"Oh, is he hurt? poor James! It was not his fault. You shall not blame him, papa. Who fired the gun?"

"I am ready to shoot myself, Miss Kyrie," said one of the gentlemen, coming forward hastily. "I had no idea we were so near the road. You cannot punish me any worse than I have been during this frightful suspense concerning your safety."

"There is no one to blame," she said gently, "but everyone has done their best. Where is my poor Peter? I trembled for him when I saw him fall."

Peter had all the while been devouring her with eyes filled with passionate devotion.

"Oh, Miss Maude, don't you go to talking about Peter's danger. Can anybody think of anything but that you are saved?"

"And now, what shall we do about a conveyance home? Both vehicles are wrecks. I'll ride back and send the best conveyance I find," said the gentleman who had fired the gun. "Miss Kyrie ought to be taken home as soon as possible. She may find herself more bruised than she suspects now."

"And the horses are to be recovered," said another. "I hope this catastrophe is not a disastrous omen for our railroad enterprise."

"It was wrong in me to insist upon coming with you, papa," whispered Maude, "but Peter and I had enjoyed it ever so much. I hope we have not lost all the lovely garlands! Peter must see."

Peter had hurried after Laurence. "Sir," he said, "you have made me your slave for life."

Laurence would have laughed, or given a light answer, but the earnestness and agitation on the quaint old face forbade.

"You are very fond of the young lady," he said.

"And shouldn't I be? I'd die twenty times to save her. 'Oh, sir, and you wouldn't wonder if you knew the story of her goodness.'

"Tell me, if there is time, while we go down to the scene of disaster."

And Peter told in tremulous tones, broken by sobs of tender gratitude or sorrowful remembrance, how Maude Kyrie had come upon him in his hour of sore need and bitter trouble, when his wife and child lay dead, and he and his boy prostrate with the terrible fever, without money and without friends. How she sent doctor and nurse, and wine and fruit, and coaxed the life back to him, and made his sole remaining boy comfortable and contented in his slow nudging illness.

"Oh, and I can never tell you all. It was not the money, nor the nice things, and they were not stinted, but the real kindness and loving thought that warmed up my life again, that made the boy go down to his grave happy in adoring and blessing her, and bidding me live to serve her," concluded Peter, wiping his eyes. "Many another can give charity, but Miss Maude gave love too; God bless her, and God bless you for saving her sweet life."

The eyes of Laurence had their mist too. It was pleasant to know this beautiful girl was as lovely in character as in person.

When they reached the prostrate form of James, Peter had a little hint of the young gentleman's own character, for Leo suddenly threw himself forward with a smothered sob, and seized his friend's hand and clung to it.

"Oh, Mr. Laurence, how could you? I didn't dare to go to see. I was so afraid—so afraid."

"Afraid of my being hurt? nonsense, Leo! You see I am all right; and how is this poor fellow?"

"The pain is bad, but I don't mind; they tell me Miss Maude is safe," answered James for himself.

Peter and the other coachman lifted him upon the cushions taken from the barouche. Then Peter found time to draw Leo into conversation, and he soon learned a history that seemed to his fertile mind to furnish a parallel to Miss Maude's goodness.

"They were made for each other in heaven, that's certain," quoth Peter, who looked with new interest upon the handsome young surveyor.

"I must see you again," said Mr. Kyrie, to Laurence, "you must let me discharge a little of this great debt I owe you. I hope I shall be able to be of service to you."

"You owe me nothing, sir," returned Laurence, firmly; "you must not think, sir, that I can consent to receive any money compensation for such service as I have given to Miss Kyrie. It is reward enough to know I have been of service."

"But you will let my influence improve your business prospects. You will not be so ungenerous, after this great obligation on my part, as to refuse to accept my thanks and my friendship," said Mr. Kyrie, warmly.

A broad smile brightened Laurence's manly face.

"Indeed no. For that I shall be too grateful, sir."

And the two shook hands warmly.

Miss Kyrie watched them gravely. When it came to her turn she simply stretched out her hand.

"There are no thanks I can speak that will be such reward as your own good heart will bring you. But I can never forget that I owe my life to you."

The little hand was gloved. As Laurence held it for that brief moment he thought of that other hand, the one which had worn the ring that haunted him still with its strange beauty, its weird significance—the emerald and ruby with the diamond heart. He had spelt out a legend of his own for its meaning, and dwelt upon it with perhaps unconsciously tender thoughts.

Ruby—that was warmth, fervour, generous passion. It held in its glowing tint the symbol of those elements which must be in every perfectly rounded character. Emerald—strength, will, yearning for perpetual glory. And at heart diamond—spotless purity, transparent innocence, priceless value.

So he read the meaning of the ring, and with these glorifying attributes invested its wearer always in his thoughts.

And he thought of it now, while he held Maude Kyrie's hand, and wished, half unconsciously, that it had proved the same as that which gave him the tiny package; which had trusted him with its secret hiding-place. He remembered how he had first fancied her face, this Miss Kyrie's, and wished that she might prove to be his fair incognito. And while he was thinking all this he held her hand, with a faint smile on his lips. But when she lifted her eyes suddenly to his, he dropped it with a faint flush mounting to his forehead.

"I beg your pardon," he said, hastily. "I think there is something mesmeric about your fingers. You sent me off into a dream."

"About people or horses?" she asked, smiling back.

"About a ring, rather, and an odd experience of mine."

"Stay and tell me about it," she pleaded.

He shook his head with an expression she at once perceived to be proof against any solicitation.

"Nay, that I can never tell to anyone, Miss Kyrie."

When he had bowed and retired, Maude Kyrie sat with drooping head and eyes resting upon her clasped hands.

"He is a hero—one of the old-time, knightly spirits come back to these degenerate days," she murmured.

And a soft colour shone a moment over her face.

But the next a quick spasm of pain chased it away.

"Oh, what am I, to be thinking of such things? Have I forgotten the terrible secret which haunts me, and waves away all selfish hopes or joys? Alas, alas. I wish that I had died, and so knowledge of it had been lost with me."

The pale face dropped down to the clasped hands. Peter stood at a respectful distance watching her uneasily.

He too had been strangely perplexed and grieved by the mysterious blight which had seemed to fall upon his darling mistress; had mourned over the change from the blithe, sunny-voiced girl who went off gaily to the seaside, and came back so drooping, and sad, and pale.

If old Peter had been there, he would have watched her every moment, and nothing could have happened, he had said more than once to James.

The thought had its sting now. He had been with her this time, and had been powerless to save. It was the gallant young surveyor who had preserved that precious life. Peter could not help feeling self-convicted, rebuked, as it were, for his previous confidence. He could not shake off a guilty feeling that Miss Maude had been in danger, and Peter close at hand, and yet someone else had rescued her.

And James was not sorry at this little taking down of Peter's invincibility, and he took a little comfort in watching the old man's meek and crest-fallen air.

Meanwhile the conveyance sent from the nearest village arrived, and it carried them all away, and left the scene peaceful and still once more.

Laurence and Leo, from their work on the neighbouring hill, saw them driving slowly down the cross road.

"There they go," said Leo, looking up into his friend's face, not without the hope of reading something there.

"Yes, I see," returned Laurence, dropping his head, and figuring away.

"I wonder—" began Leo, with an impatient sort of sigh, and then paused.

His companion volunteered nothing, and Leo gave another little sigh, and another, until Laurence dropped his pencil, and turned with a smile:

"Well, Leo, what is it? Let's settle the question, and then go to work again."

Leo coloured a little, but laughed also.

"I was so disappointed, sir; that Mr. Kyrie must

be very rich, I judge. It seems to me he might have given you a little more than thanks for risking your own life to save his daughter's."

"So that is the trouble. Ease your mind of any hard thoughts towards the gentleman. He would have been very glad, I have no doubt, to hand me over his pocket-book, no matter how well filled it might have been. But I checked him in the outset. Do you think I would take money, Leo, for such an act as that?"

"But I am sure the gentleman's assistance would be very useful to you," persisted Leo, though he hung his head.

"Well, yes. And he is going to give that, and I shall accept it. He said also that I should have a very remunerative position during the getting-up and making of the new line. And that I shall not decline. I think this acquaintance is going to do great things for us, Leo. Rest your mind contented with that assurance."

"Oh," and the boy drew a long breath of relief, "then I will be satisfied. That was what I wanted to know, if we were really in the avenue that brings out to the beautiful garden, and to your letter, and to Bertha."

Laurence smiled, and then went off into a dreamy vision. In place of the letter, which held no significance for him, he had set the mysterious ring. And he also asked the question eagerly. Would this experience lead him also to that: And only the carol of birds in the distant tree-tops, and the soft sigh of the wind, answered.

## CHAPTER XX.

ANDREW COURTNEY was not certainly quite so transported with delight at the unexpected meeting as the overjoyed little Tib, but he could not be insensible to the sweet flattery of the sparkling eyes, the blushing face, the dewy red lips a-tremble with eagerness. And moreover, Tib was such a pretty creature, and she had never looked half so lovely as now.

"Why, little Tib Harwood!" exclaimed he, turning around and facing her with a pleased smile. "I should as soon have thought of meeting the man in the moon: Where have you come from, and whither are you going? I declare you have grown so pretty you have almost outgrown my knowledge. And how are the interesting family of Damer, the lovely Miss Arminta, and the amiable Master Joe?"

"Oh, Andrew, don't ask me about them. I know you won't blame me. Oh, I have had so much trouble there, and—and—I should never dare to tell anyone but you; but oh, Andrew—I've—run-away!"

The solemn expression of the rosy lips, the deepening terror in the lovely violet eyes, had a curious effect upon Andrew. He was keenly struck by their quaintness.

He laughed heartily.

"Well, to be sure; that is a good one. You've run away. Capital, capital, little Tib! Why, I never gave you credit for so much spirit."

But he came to understand a little of the tragic meaning it had for her when she told him the story.

"Why, Tib, why, poor little Tib," he exclaimed, again and again. "Do you really mean you haven't a shilling in the world, and are flying you can't tell where?"

"You don't blame me, oh, Andrew, you don't blame me?"

And the pretty face took on such a look of trouble and alarm, that Andrew answered quickly, to bring back the smiles:

"Oh, no, you dear little thing! How could I have the heart to blame you? I only wonder you have not tried it before. But it is a very hard situation for you."

"Very hard," said Tib, gently sighing. "But if you don't blame me, I shan't care."

"I should like to horsewhip Joe Damer," went on Andrew.

"Oh, I'm so thankful I've found you!" murmured Tib, in a tone of sweet content. "I felt all the time as if I must meet you somewhere."

"Why, have you remembered me all this time, Tib?" he asked, amusing himself by watching the blushes come and go on the peachy cheek.

"Indeed I have. Ramembered you, indeed! Weren't you all the friend almost I ever had, that ever spoke a pleasant word to me? There wasn't a day that I didn't wonder what you were doing, and when I should see you again. Ah, and how I cried at nights in the town there, because I thought you were in it and I couldn't find you!"

Innocent child! She grew prettier and sweeter in Andrew's eyes every moment. All unconsciously she betrayed to his vain soul the wealth of the innocence he adored at his shrine. Andrew Courtney's was not a nature to put away any pleasure simply because someone else might be harmed by its indulgence.

He did not stop to think of this innocent child's true welfare, but only how charming it was to see those deep eyes lighten up at a glance from him, and how amusing it would be for him to have her near him, where he could occasionally, when he was in the mood for it, spend an entertaining hour in her company.

"Well, Tib," said he, "since you have found me, I think you must let me look out for you. I can easily find a good place."

"Oh, Andrew, how good you are!" faltered Tib, a bright drop slipping down over the curling eyelash, and splashing upon her hand. "I knew all my troubles would be over when I found you."

"We'll see what can be done," returned Andrew, with the briskness of one who has made up his mind. "Let me see your ticket, how far your poor little purse was taking you."

Tib yielded it up, and settled back in her seat with a low sigh of restful content. It was so sweet to feel all the care and anxiety lifted away. She had no more worry, no more plaining. Andrew would manage it all.

Andrew took out a silver piece and put it with the ticket, and then put both into her hand, giving a little playful flip to the fluttering fingers at the same time.

"There, Tib, give that to the ticket collector when he comes, and tell him you have changed your mind, and are going on to Ridgeway Station. He ought to consider a single look at such violet eyes as yours payment enough. You are uncommon pretty, Miss Tib! Have you found it out yet?"

Tib did not seem in the least embarrassed by the compliment. The child looked up with a frank smile.

"I am ever so glad that you think so, Andrew. I am glad to be pretty to you. But I could not bear to hear Joe Damer say it."

Andrew busied himself with folding his newspaper, and was apparently entirely oblivious of the girl's presence.

At Ridgeway Station they left the train. Tib was a little disturbed, but only a little, to find a carriage and driver waiting for her companion. He had certainly made rapid advancement from the humble position in which she had first known him. She stood meekly where he bade her, while he went and spoke a few words with the driver.

"I've come across a poor girl who used to work at an old country farm-house where I stayed once. She's in great trouble, and has been shamefully cheated by her employers. I want you to drive round by Farmer Black's, I think they'll take her, and find her of good use."

The man acquiesced, and Andrew, telling Tib in a low voice to pull over her face the warm veil, brought her, and put her and her humble bundle into the luxurious carriage.

Tib examined it with timid admiration:

"Is it yours, Andrew?" she asked presently, a little awe in her voice.

Andrew laughed gaily.

"Should you be afraid of me if it was, silly Tib? No, it is not mine, but it belongs to a very kind friend of mine, and I have the use of it when I like. I have come into better prospects, I can tell you, my dear. One of these days I shall own it, I dare say."

And he looked around upon the vehicle with a satisfied smile, and began to explain to her, but stopped in the midst of it, with a smile at his own folly, and instead, proceeded to talk about the old days at the Damer Farm.

And presently the carriage stopped at a neat little cottage, and Andrew left her in the carriage, and ran into the house a moment, but returned in a brief time with a pleased face.

"It is all right. Come, out with you, little Tib. Here is as snug and cosy a home as you could ask. Mrs. Black understands that if you don't behave well she is to come to me with complaints."

Mrs. Black came out smiling. Tib's heart went out to her the moment she saw the round, rosy, contented face, and yet she stood a moment on the step hesitating.

"But are you going a great ways off, Andrew?"

"Nonsense," said Andrew, in a low voice. "Don't go to thinking I shall desert you now I've found you. I'm scarcely two miles away, and I ride past here nearly every day."

At which Tib's face brightened again.

"Here she is, Mrs. Black," said Andrew, gaily; "you'll find her as neat handed and spry as a fairy. And as for the butter she can make—well, I believe a golden pat of it every time I come. And I know you're going to be kind to her, for you couldn't be cross or hard with anyone. I know you well enough for that."

"I'm sure I'm right glad for her help. Thank you, sir, for remembering my saying that the other day."

"You know you can rely upon her story. Poor

thing! I'm thankful she'll learn at last what good treatment is," observed Andrew, diplomatically, as he stood on the threshold.

Mrs. Black's round face was wreathed in smiles.

"Indeed, sir, I hope I know what it is to be a civilized woman."

And she took the girl into the house, where everything was bright and sunny; even the cat sleek and fat, so that she had no inclination for anything beyond a sleepy purr, and made her at home in a bright, motherly way that poor Tib had only dreamed about, but never before experienced. She would not let the girl go about the work that afternoon, but put her in the chair at the vine-wreathed window, looking upon the road, and bade her rest for that day; it would be time enough in the morning to show what she could do.

"Oh, what a pleasant place it is here! How beautiful that vine is! Mrs. Damer wouldn't have any green near the house. She said it was always making litter, and spoiling the paint," murmured Tib. "I do think that vine makes everything else look beautiful too."

Mrs. Black laughed.

"Yes, that's what Miss Wise says. She brought me the vine, and set it there. You ought to see her house, and of course you will. It's all covered with vines from top to bottom, from one end to the other. I never cared much for such things, I own, but I liked Miss Wise so well, I tended to the vine for her sake. And mercy on us! How it took to growing; and by and by I got to being proud of it myself; and now, you see, it's over half the house."

"Miss Wise, that's a queer name," thought Tib, not venturing to speak the thought aloud; but lying back in the chair, and sunning herself in the ecstasy of what seemed a perfect olympus.

The rosy mistress of the house trotted here and there on household offices, but in a little while came with her knitting work, and sat down at the other window.

"Dear, dear—how nice it seems to have somebody to talk to," she chattered, while the bright needles clicked in and out the blue line of yarn that seemed to unravel of itself from her finger tips. "I told Mr. Andrew how lonesome I got at times. The men have to go so far off to the lower farm, and the children carry their dinners to school, for it's too far for them to walk. How they'll stare when they see you."

"Oh, are there children too?" asked Tib; "it does seem too beautiful for me. I'm afraid there must be something."

And she stopped and looked away beyond the vine festoons, beyond the green fields, up to a patch of clear blue sky, and a shadow dropped over the smiling blue eyes.

"Must be something?" repeated Mrs. Black in a puzzled tone.

"Yes," answered Tib, "something sorrowful and painful. It seems all too pleasant, you know, for one like me."

And still the eyes gazed on the sky as if reading there the answer.

"Ah, well!" continued Tib, in a moment, smiling bravely. "I shan't complain. I accept it as it is, and am thankful."

Somehow, Mrs. Black seemed to feel as if the girl had been talking with something, or some one invisible, and she could not find words herself to answer with. So she knit on in silence.

"I shall be as happy as the day is long," said Tib, a moment after, coming out of the unwanted mood. "It seems so strange to me to be sitting here, and not frightened, and in no ways troubled. Oh, I shall be so glad to work, Mrs. Black! Indeed you shall not lose by your kindness. Please let me have some knitting now; I shall be happier, really and truly, and not feel so guilty, if I am doing something."

And Mrs. Black, seeing that was true, rose softly, with a low laugh of placid content, and brought some needles, and two balls of soft crimson and white wool.

"Then if you can you shall begin Jenny's mittens. It doesn't seem now as if the child would need them. But dear, dear! the days slip on so: the first you know the leaves are gone, and the flowers, and then come the cold and the snow. And then the mittens will be needed by her and the boys."

"A little girl and boys; oh, how beautiful it must be!" chimed in Tib.

"Yes, it is," said the mother, beaming with kindness; "and they are good children, too, though, maybe, I'm a little too easy with 'em. But, dear me! I can't bear to think they'll ever look back and think home was a vexatious, or a chilly or a hard place. They make a good deal of work. You'll try to be patient, I hope, if they do. Now, won't you?"

Tib's great blue eyes fairly glowed with her ap-

proval. Oh, what an angelic woman Mrs. Black seemed to her!

She threaded the soft yarn over her fingers to make the loops for stitchees, and breathed out again in a tone of fullest content:

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Black, oh, yes. And it is so beautiful."

And so it seemed to her as the day went on 'hat she had stumbled upon a little spot of Paradise. The farmer came home, and was as jolly and friendly as his wife. The children came laughing and shouting from school, running a race through the front doorway, to see which should get the first kiss from mother, and show first the reward received at school.

The boys were stout, healthy fellows of nine years and eleven. Jenny a rather delicate little fairy, who was in Tib's lap in ten minutes, with her arms clasped tightly around her neck. It was as the mother said. They made a good deal of work. It was plain to see that there was no terror or dread taught them. The hats went down on the floor recklessly. The room, in a trice, had lost its orderly look, but—they were all so merry and happy, and they loved each other so dearly!

"Oh," said poor, forlorn little Tib, eyes and lips and all her face ashine with a rapturous smile, "this seems almost too beautiful for me, as if I had found heaven on the earth, which can't be, can it? And so I think something must come by-and-bye, something sharp, to wake me up."

It did not come that week, certainly, for it seemed to her that the days only brought new delights with every rising sun. Mrs. Black was thoroughly delighted with her neat, dexterous and faithful service; the children and the men charmed with her pretty looks, and her quaint, odd ways. Over and over again there were mutual congratulations upon her advent, and when Andrew came the next time, Mrs. Black drew him aside to whisper,

"Indeed, and you needn't think I shall take your offer to pay a part of her wages. She'll more than earn the best I can give her."

"All right," said Andrew, "and where is the paragon?"

Mrs. Black pointed to the dairy room, and let him go alone with the neat carpet-bag on his arm. She had her suspicions as to the contents, and was willing he should enjoy Tib's surprise by himself.

A prettier picture than Tib made as she stood by the open window skimming cream, one does not often see. No, not though you take the loveliest city belle, just ready to step into the crowded ball-room. And when she turned at the sound of his step, and recognising him, flushed up into such rosy blushes, Andrew could not forbear exclaiming:

"You lovely little creature! Tib, you must let me kiss you."

And Tib in her trusting innocence allowed it, and heard her shining eyes joyously to his.

"Oh, Andrew, how can I thank you enough for bringing me here? I am so happy, happier than I ever thought I could be."

"That is all right," said Andrew, again. "Did you think I would put you under another old cat's claws, after your experience at the Damer's? And Mrs. Black is as pleased as you. But, I say, Tib, I want you to come out a minute, and overhaul this carpet-bag."

"Let me finish this pan," said Tib, deftly slipping the bright skimmer under the snowy clot of cream, "it won't take me a moment."

Andrew was nothing loth to watch the smooth white arms, the graceful motion, the airy, bird-like ways, and he was pleasing himself with picturing her delight at the present he had brought. So it was Tib who said first:

"Now I am ready."

Then they went out into the sitting-room, and Andrew, laughing merrily, passed her the bag.

"There! I picked that up on my way here. It's got your name on it. See what you make of it."

Tib shot him a luminous glance while she turned the key. Then came a little cry of delight, and the next instant she had out a pretty little hat with blue trimmings. After that came a neat black silk sacque, a pair of gloves, dainty boots, and materials for three new dresses. Mrs. Black had come in by this time, dimpling with smiles of sincere sympathy.

But Tib's joy was too deep for words. She could only falter what she had been saying ever since she arrived at Mrs. Black's.

"It is too beautiful, oh, it is too beautiful!"

Andrew enjoyed her gratitude and homage as thoroughly as he anticipated but he stopped her parting attempt to express it, with a hasty,

"Nonsense, Tib. I tell you it is nothing. I am prospering greatly. I have stumbled upon a piece of rare good luck; it's a pity if I couldn't let you have a driblet of the good fortune which has come to me. Now be as happy as you can, little one. And don't

you fret about Joe Damer's finding you. Just send for me if he comes. I've talked with Mrs. Black about it. You shan't run from him again. I'll give in my testimony, and we'll defy them to claim you, after all their abuse. I'm going that way this week, and I'll enquire how affairs are at Damer farm."

"Oh no, I'm not afraid of Joe now," returned Tib; "I'm not afraid of anything, now I've found you."

"You are a dear little thing, and if you will look so pretty, Tib, you must expect to be kissed. I'm glad you believe me to be your friend."

"I do, oh, indeed do, the best friend I have," answered Tib, and watched him when he took leave with fond, admiring eyes.

He had scarcely got away, when a lady on horseback came cantering up to the door.

Tib liked the frank, fearless, handsome face, and was pleased enough to have her suspicion verified when Mrs. Black came out with outstretched hand.

"Oh, Miss Wise, I am so glad to see you; dear, dear Miss Wise, it does me good to see your face again. Do come in, you must come in. I want to show you Tib."

The lady laughed a clear ringing laugh, that sounded, as she looked, fearless and happy.

"Tib! what is it, a spaniel, a kitten, or a chicken? You have always a new something, Mrs. Black. Sometimes I think such motherly natures as yours fall into too narrow places in a single home. What a matron for a child's hospital, or mission, you would make. Then a hundred little hearts would be warmed and fed, instead of your three."

"Now, Miss Wise," in a protesting tone, "do you think my three don't deserve more'n they get?"

"No, indeed. I was only thinking how curiously things get awry. I'll warrant you'll find nine out of every ten heads of those great houses of foundlings and orphans, to be hard, cold, narrow-natured women, hardly capable of making a child of their own bright and sunny. And yet the hundred will be dependent for a crumb of the stinted loaf. And your three get the generous, overflowing measure. But where's the Tib?"

"Here," answered Mrs. Black, drawing the girl from the window, "and you can't think how delighted I am with her. She's to live with me and help, you know."

"Well may you be; I am sure I congratulate you. You have laid a fairy spell on a violet and transformed it into this blue-eyed little creature. My dear, is not your name Viola, or Panay?"

"Tib only," answered the girl, smiling back to the frank, honest eyes and friendly face, "or Elizabeth."

"You will never be anything but Violet for me, just as my Bertha is a Lily, with her little, stately, foreign looks and ways. But, bless me! there is a familiar look. I am keen to pounce upon likenesses. Where have you seen that face that is brought back by looking at yours? Don't turn yet. I must get it before you stir. Oh, now I know. Why, it is odd, but I'm sure I'm right! You have a look of Captain Mathew, and more still of that picture which hangs in his cabin. I must bring him to see you some day. Well, to be sure, Mrs. Black, this is famous improvement. I will bring Bertha over to see this pretty child. Maybe she can teach her something useful from her gleanings at school. And now I must look in your garden. And, by the way, I came over for some of your famous nasturtium pickles. Mine failed. You love flowers, don't you, violet eyes? You must coax Mr. Black into giving you a plot for pansies. I'll find the plants any time."

And Miss Wise glided away with that light and yet firm step of hers, and in a moment more was out in the garden.

"What a singular person! And how much I like her. She is like a sea-breeze coming in upon a sultry day," thought Tib. "And added again: 'Everything is so beautiful here, I am almost afraid.' And her eyes sought the sky again wistfully.

(To be continued.)

**RATE OF POSTAGE.**—Mr. Graves has given notice, in the House of Commons, that on the 13th of March he would move:—"That in the opinion of that House the rate of inland postage on printed matter should be reduced to one halfpenny for two ounces, and also the postage on newspapers to one halfpenny."

**THE SOURCE AND MEANING OF THE "THAMES."**—In a paper by George R. Wright, F.S.A., upon the *verata questio* of the true source and name of the Thames, he shows strong reasons for holding that its real head is in a marshy place, called Trewsbury Mead, a little to the north of the Fossway, in the parish of Kemble, near Cirencester—a spot from which, though dry in summer, there comes forth in the winter months a stream "as large as one of the London fire-main." He holds to the belief that the original name of the river was Tamyse or Tomess,

which was Latinised into Isis; and that radically the name is one—or at all events sprung from one source—with the names of many other well-known rivers, the Tay, Tagus, Tavy, Tamar, Tyne, Tame, Tees, &c.; he urges that possibly it may be even identical with the Greek word "Potamos," of which it would seem that the two initial letters are only an arbitrary prefix, and not really part of the word.

## SCIENCE.

An ordinary magnet loses its magnetism when heated. But molten cast iron, surrounded with a helix, through which a strong galvanic current is sent, becomes strongly magnetic, and retains its magnetism as long as the current is continued. This fact has been discovered by M. Treve, who draws some important inferences as regards the magnetism of the earth.

**UTILISING THE PRINTING INK ON OLD PAPERS.**—According to the Frankfort *Zeitung*, a discovery has been made by Herr Kircher, of Wurttemberg, of a new means of using old printing ink. The essential part of the discovery is that, by a peculiar process, the ink can be removed from the surface of the paper, at a cost of two shillings (one gulden) for every hundred pounds of printed paper, and further, the material is then ready for use again.

**TEST FOR HARDNESS OF METAL.**—The hardness of metals may now be ascertained by aid of an instrument invented by a French engineer. It consists of a drill, turned by a machine of a certain and uniform strength. The instrument indicates the number of revolutions made by the drill. From this, compared with the length of bore-holes produced, the hardness of the metal is estimated. It is said that a great proportion of the rails now employed in France are tested by this instrument.

The first course of experimental firing and testing of the Martini-Henry rifle over the army shooting ranges at Browndown, near Gosport, has just been concluded, and in the general results is very favourable to the new arm as compared with the Snider. The trajectory is lower with the new arm than with the Snider, and, with a strong wind blowing across the range, the shooting is incomparably straighter. The sword bayonet fitted to the Martini-Henry is also considered to be a much superior weapon to the old bayonet, as well as being more available for general uses with troops in the field. The length of the Martini-Henry rifle also enables the two front ranks to fire standing, a most important consideration in the opinion of many military men, now that infantry are armed with breech-loaders, whose rapidity of fire is being every day increased. The defects in the new rifle and its equipments appear to be a smallness in the chamber as compared with the size of the cartridge used, a weakness in the spring which causes miss-fires, and an utter unsuitability for service in the field of the partitioned ammunition pouch, all of which are capable of easy remedy.

## MEASURING STAR-HEAT.

LAST year the scientific world hailed with interest the discovery that heat comes to us from behind the infinite depths which separate our earth from the fixed stars, bringing us a message not less full of interest than that conveyed by the stellar lights. It seemed wonderful indeed that any contrivance man could devise should enable him to render sensible the heat sent forth on all sides from those distant suns. We know that at midday the summer sun pours his beams so fiercely on the earth that we compare their heat with that of a fire near at hand. But we recognise the fact that even within the known bounds of the solar system the sensible heat his direct rays can produce is diminished more than a thousandfold. And knowing this, it seems as though the physicist in Neptune—supposing that arctic world to be the abode of reasoning creatures—would have a problem of some difficulty in the measurement of the warmth received from the tiny sun which rules the Neptunian day. But the distance which separates Neptune from the central luminary of the planetary scheme sinks into utter nothingness beside the vast gap which lies between that scheme and the nearest of the fixed stars. Seven thousand times farther from the sun than Neptune stands the advanced guard of the stellar host, the famous star which marks the raised fore-foot of the Centaur. Light and heat from beyond that enormous distance are reduced fifty-million times more than the solar light and heat which shed their faint rays over the Neptunian ice-fields.

Strange, indeed, and difficult was the problem which had thus been mastered. And yet the lesson taught us was one which in another form we had already learned. We had been able by the aid of a new and wonderful instrument—the spectroscope—to assure ourselves that the stars are suns in all essential respects resembling our own. We know

that around them hang suspended the vapours of metals which only the fiercest heat can melt, for we saw that the light which came to us from them had been robbed of the waves which those metallic vapours alone have the power of selectively absorbing.

But now a new and more difficult task has been achieved. Astronomy has not been content with the discovery that the stellar heat can be felt, but has faced the more arduous problem of measuring that heat. Worthy of the task has been the instrument with which it has been undertaken. The great equatorial of the Greenwich Observatory is perhaps surpassed by no telescope in the world as regards the optical qualities which the astronomer delights in. Future ages will doubtless record a long list of physical researches in which the powers of the noble equatorial of our nobly furnished Observatory shall have been employed by the skilful and practised astronomers now gathered at Greenwich.

It first great achievement in this special direction is one of which our country may well be proud. Many months since Mr. Stone, F.R.S., the chief assistant at Greenwich, and already known to fame for his successful attacks upon the problem of the sun's distance, turned his thoughts towards the application of the powers of the great equatorial to the determination of stellar heat. The results he then attained, though highly interesting, did not become widely known, Mr. Huggins having anticipated their publication by communicating to the Royal Society his own successful treatment of the same problem. But, as we have said, it was the simple fact that we do receive heat from the stars, not a quantitative estimate of their heating powers, which was then laid before the scientific world. Mr. Stone hoped to be able to announce the actual amount of heat which the first-class stars send to this globe on which we live.

A little consideration will show the enormous difficulty of the problem. By an ingenious arrangement Mr. Stone was enabled to overcome this difficulty in great part, and to secure that which so delighted the soul of the man of science, a reliable zero. Let not the uninitiated be confounded by this mystic word,—it implies merely that which may be compared to the end of a rule or measuring-tape. To know if a star sends us heat at any moment we must know what heat our instruments would show before receiving the star's heat; otherwise, what are we to measure from? But this initial heat is continually varying. What Mr. Stone had first to do, then, was to master this difficulty. Others remained which we have not space to specify, but these also he overcame.

At last, after enormous labour, the heat received from two well-known stars has been measured. Arcturus, the leading brilliant of the Herdsman, and Vega, the chief star of the Lyre, are the two stars dealt with by Mr. Stone. From a careful measurement of their light, Sir John Herschel long since determined that these stars are of equal splendour; but Arcturus shines with a ruddy yellow light, while Vega exhibits a colour which has been compared to the gleam of highly-polished steel. The estimates of their heat correspond with the aspect of these stars. The fiery Arcturus sends us about twice as much heat as the bluish Vega. Minute indeed is the quantity of heat received from either star, even Arcturus having a direct heating effect corresponding to but about the 800,000th part of a degree Fahrenheit. Or, Mr. Stone remarks, the result may be otherwise stated as follows:—The heat received from Arcturus is sensibly the same as that from the face of a three-inch iron cube full of boiling water at a distance of 383 yards.

To the worlds which circle around these brilliant stars our sun doubtless supplies no larger a degree of heat; nay, we have good reason to believe that he is relatively an insignificant orb. Around Arcturus are well-warmed worlds, nourished by the rays which belong to the red end of the spectrum. Those which circle around Vega, if equally distant, are less plentifully supplied with heat. On the other hand, if one may speculate so confidently as to the state of these worlds as to regard photography as an art practised among their inhabitants, then must the people warmed by Arcturus sit longer for their portraits than those on whom the brilliant Vega pours his powerful actinic rays. Seriously, the researches we have been dealing with suggest strange thoughts for our consideration.

The question of the plurality of worlds had seemed perplexing enough when we considered merely the strangely various conditions under which living creatures must subsist in the different orbs which circle round our sun. But when we contemplate the varieties presented among the fixed stars, the mind is lost in the attempt to conceive the enormous range of variety which must characterize the races of living creatures subsisting in the systems of which those stars are the central luminaries.



## FAITHFUL MARGARET

## CHAPTER XII.

If there be love in mortals, this was love!  
He was a villain—ay, reproaches shower  
On him, but not the passion nor its power,  
Which only proved, all other virtues gone,  
Not guilt itself could quench the loveliest one.

Byron.

It was about noon the next morning when, for the second time, Colonel Brand presented himself at Dr. Gay's door, requesting the honour of an interview with Margaret Walsingham.

"Shall you see him to-day?" asked the languid voice of Mrs. Gay at the lady's bedroom door, when she had delivered the colonel's message.

Margaret opened the door and looked out: her great troubled eyes were circled with violet shadows, she had not slept, and if those wan cheeks did not belie her, she had wept many hours of the preceding night.

"I must meet him, I suppose; I may as well have it over to-day. I want to get rid of the whole business as fast as I can."

Colonel Brand rose as the tall, proud figure glided in, and with a quiet bow passed to a distant sofa.

"We meet, I hope, more amicably than we parted," observed he, with an intent gaze on her countenance.

"On my part, yes," answered she, with a deep blush.

"I have heard how you refused to possess my fortune, feeling how you would defraud me," said he. "I feel of course grateful to you for your honourable conduct."

The measured tones fell harshly on the woman's high soul—she shrank from the ignoble praise.

"Sir, I could not honestly take what was by right yours," she said, looking proudly at the man. "I never meant to defraud you, or to stand in your way. I only wish to get out of your way now that you have returned safely home. I am glad that you have come back, Colonel Brand, for I regretted your reported death most bitterly."

Tears came to her eyes, and through them the thin visage of the soldier seemed to narrow into a treasery of his old self, and she dashed them away, ashamed of her weakness.

"I thank you for the kindness," said the soft, wary voice. "I did not believe that I had one friend in England who would mourn my death; perhaps had I known this I should never have left it."

She glanced incredulously at him. How could he

stoop to such insincerity, who used to glory in his haughty plain-speaking?

The words of kindness died upon her lips, and she turned away with a heart-sick sigh.

"I see that I can hardly get Miss Walsingham to believe that I am not the scoffer who insulted her at Castle Brand, seven months ago," said he with an ingratiating gentleness; "but I for one have lived to see my mistake, and perhaps you may soon see yours. I have come back in many respects a changed man."

"Changed?" faltered she, raising her wistful eyes to his. "Yes, you are. I should not have known you."

And the shifting, contracting eyeballs answered her by dropping to the carpet, while the olive face whitened to a deadly pallor, and the thin lips twitched suddenly.

Changed? Oh, Heavens! yes; had she been blind to read such nobility in you ill-favoured face?

Changed? By all that was generous, brave, and true, this Colonel Brand had belied her mad belief; no foolish devotee had ever bowed before a more unworthy shrine than had poor Margaret Walsingham.

"One summer in the south, under such disagreeable circumstances, would alter any man's appearance," quoth he, twisting his black moustache with his long brown fingers, and furtively reading her disdainful face. "What between exposure, wounds, and imprisonment, personal beauty stands but a poor chance at the seat of war. But I hope that what I have lost in personal appearance I have gained in the qualities which a good woman admires most. I believe my heart is bettered, my dear Miss Walsingham."

Hypocrite!

She vowed that she would rather hear that insolent laugh and the brutal exclamation:

"Ye gods! what a Medusa!" than this silky sentimentality from St. Udo Brand.

It was not like him to crouch at her feet, the hero whom she had forgiven long ago for his roughness, exalting that roughness to the pedestal of just contempt for a successful adventures.

Why could he not, out of that nobility of heart which she had credited him with, see that she had forgotten the old grudge long ago, and that she was ready to do him full justice?

What did he take her for? a dissembling schemer, who had not been sincere in her rejection of the Brand estate, and whom he must fawn upon in order to win his own from her greedy clutch?

"I have nothing to do with your reformation, Colonel Brand," she said, with cold formality. "My

duty is plain to me, whatever you are. I shall require no prompting to do it."

His eyes sparkled.

For the first time he looked frankly at her, and seemed at ease.

"I am relieved to hear you say so, Miss Walsingham," he said, with something of the old free air; "for I was not inclined to quarrel with you about my grandmother's disposition of the property. I should be sorry to return to the angry feelings which I at first was foolish enough to indulge in against you; for I must admit that I am very much more agreeably impressed with you to-day than I was that morning in the library in Castle Brand. So, suppose we let bygones drop, and begin on a friendly footing?"

"I repeat that your changed feelings have nothing to do with my duty," said Margaret, coldly. "It can make no difference whether you regard me with toleration or indifference. I shall do you justice."

He stared suspiciously at her, and one or two wrinkles lined his forehead.

"You don't mean to say that you are going to offer me some paltry compensation instead of submitting quietly to the terms of the will?" demanded he.

She turned a look of splendid scorn upon him.

Could he not find it in his soul to conceive of strict justice? Did he not know the meaning of generosity? How mean, then, was this heart, which ascribed such abject meanness to her!

"No; I did not think of that," said she. "You shall have every shilling of your property, Colonel Brand."

"By Jove, you amaze me!" cried he, rising to approach near her. "Then you have decided to marry me, after all, and let us both have the lands?"

His exultation shone out in his evil countenance, and sent him hastily across the room to take her hand.

But Margaret shrank back and with a strong frown waved him away.

What had frozen the generous words on her lips?

Why did she let him rush to every conclusion but the right one?

She had come into his presence to say:

"I freely give up my claim upon your property, and place the deeds entirely in your hands, wishing no further connection with it or with you; and so—farewell!"

But here she sat, chilled, bitter at heart, coolly asking herself:

"Is it well for me to be too hasty? Since I have

been so utterly mistaken in the character of this man, may I not be mistaken in rashly following out my first impulse regarding his grandmother's property? Yes, I am rash. I will wait a while before I make my intention known."

"I must know you better, sir, before I can form a just opinion of you," said she. "Perhaps we had better defer this matter until we have each had time to decide upon the wisest course?"

"We have scarcely four months," said he, with a frown.

"They are ample for the purpose," she retorted, and rose to terminate the interview.

"When am I to see you again, Miss Walsingham?" asked Colonel Brand, in softly pitched tones. Without analyzing the strong impulse which prompted her, she replied:

"You are welcome to come here every evening, if you choose to make an associate of your grandmother's companion."

And the satire checked the exaggerated deference with which he was making his adieus, and sent him away with a touch of St. Udo's lofty style.

She stood long at the window, following that tall, fine figure with darkened eyes, and biting her lips fiercely.

"Oh, how foolish I have been," she groaned, when he had disappeared, "to credit that small, cold heart with noble qualities! To invest that suspicious soul with high impulses, and then to bow down and worship him for a fallen god! Does not his quailing eye speak of a vile history, of which he is such a coward as to fear the exposure? He, the gallant soldier and invincible hero! Oh, blind world, to wear such a bandage of credulity. He is incapable of bravery. I protest that a man with such a downward eye could not look peril in the face. He fears me—me, Margaret Walsingham—who trembled at his voice. How can this paradox be explained? Is it possible that I have been so insanely mistaken in the man as this?"

Colonel Brand forthwith began to visit Margaret Walsingham with a view to winning her for his wife, and at every interview her aversion increased.

She soon came to shudder if she but heard his voice, and in her heart violently contradicted every word he uttered, as if she saw the lie on his face, when she detected his petty subterfuges to trap her interest, and wily schemes to catch her love, as regularly as he had recourse to them. And she knew in her soul that the man was false in all except his intention to win back his fortune.

"Where is that St. Udo Brand I mourned for?" wailed she, one evening after a stormy interview, when he had unwittingly disclosed the foul distortion of his soul to her abhorring eyes. "Where has that great spirit fled which cried for help, to save itself from ruin, at the hands of Julian Devon? Must I accept the detestable truth that the gold which I thought I had discovered beneath the veil was but tinsel all the time, and tarnished with many an indelible stain of crime? Oh, St. Udo! come back to me as you used to come in my grief, and reveal your sad, heroic history once more, that I may believe in human nature again! But for that secret, wily nature, I loathe it—oh, I loathe that man!" she hissed, passionately. "Something rises up in my heart against him every hour I see him, and whispers:

"Crush that serpent!"

"How could he have concealed his real nature from everybody so successfully? and not clever enough to conceal his nature from me, and I am not particularly penetrating. Can this be St. Udo Brand? Good Heavens! what an idea!"

Margaret suddenly relapsed into utter silence—the half-whispered thoughts died on her lips and she grew fearfully pale. The idea had shot through her brain like a blinding flash of light: it dazzled, it distracted her, she struggled against the fast growing conviction, as the unconscious wretch from his half-fatal bath in the ocean struggles against returning life, preferring the stupor to the throes of the new existence.

But it grew to her, she could not shake it off; she wondered, aghast at herself for wondering, why she had not known it in that first, stunned, incredulous gaze, when all her joy at his return froze into cold repulsion, and she recognised a worm instead of St. Udo, the hero.

Then she fell into a dreadful state of excitement, she paced her room for hours, clasping her hands frantically as if she felt her need of a tight hold on some human being, and had no friend but herself; and every dread possibility passed slowly and with ruthless pertinacity before her shrinking eye. She never had passed such a forlorn night yet.

When her strength gave out she lay on her bed, with her sleepless gaze fastened upon the wintry sky, and thought out the problem with the terrible stars for counsellors.

"That man has come here determined to marry me for the sake of the fortune I hold; and he has every hope that I will consent. He has traded upon his extraordinary resemblance to St. Udo Brand,

and, trusting to our slight knowledge of St. Udo Brand, expects to pass without difficulty for him.

"So, St. Udo Brand is dead, after all. Brave heart, forgive me for the wrong I did you in believing this reptile to be you. Now am I to suffer an impostor to personate Colonel Brand because I am a woman and feel natural terror of the villain? No, I swear that I will not suffer the imposture. If all the world should believe in this man's identity with Colonel Brand, if I did not believe it, I would try to prove his falsehood. Mrs. Brand left her fortune to me, because she trusted to my honour that I would do my best to save her grandson from destruction through its agency; and since he has perished I will not permit any other to get it upon false pretences. Why should I? It would be wrong for this man to get it, and if he were my own brother I would not give it to him when it was wrong; how much less would I relinquish it at the solicitation of this man? I would far rather crush him than enrich him," she exclaimed through her wet teeth, while her eyes gleamed like the stars she was gazing at.

"Thus far my mind is made up, that I will withstand the man who calls himself Colonel Brand. But how am I to do it? I will take possession of Castle Brand at once, that he may not get it before me. I will hold it against all his machinations. And when I am settled there I will try my best to unmask him, and ruin his infamous scheme. I need hope for no assistance from Mr. Davenport or Dr. Gay; as usual, they will call me half mad and disregard my convictions. Unaided, unadvised, I must enter this strange conflict—where it may lead me, Heaven knows. But I dare not shrink from it whatever befalls me. I must and shall prove this wretched impostor."

Dr. Gay was startled at his breakfast by the appearance of his guest coming into the breakfast-room with a grave, weary face.

"You have slept ill, my dear," said he, paternally offering her a seat beside him.

"Doctor, I am going to Castle Brand to-day."

"Bless me, what for?"

"To live there. Will you drive me over after breakfast, if you please?"

"But—how—what is your reason, my dear?"

"Please, do not ask it. I do not wish to reveal it at all."

"Have we—has Mrs. Gay displeased you?" demanded the little man, growing very red.

"No, she has not," said Margaret, sweetly; "you have both been most kind."

"This is very extraordinary, after your last expressed decision that you would never enter Castle Brand—is not that what you said?"

"I have changed my mind," she said, obstinately, "and you must not feel displeased with me. I must go to Castle Brand immediately."

The doctor got up, and hurried through the room in great perturbation; he knitted his brows, he pshawed, he stumbled against things in the most provoking manner, and his wife looked after him with an air of Christian resignation.

"Strange—unaccountable!" ejaculated the doctor, turning a suspicious gaze upon Margaret Walsingham. "Pray, madam, has Colonel Brand anything to do with your change of purpose?"

Then, indeed, her grave sweetness vanished, and a hard, bitter expression crossed her face.

"I will answer nothing," she said, with a chilling reserve; "and you will be good enough to allow me my own way, unquestioned, for once."

"Oh, certainly, Miss Walsingham," returned the doctor, with satiric courtesy, and rushed from the room to order out his gig.

She was waiting for him in the little parlour when he came in, with her bonnet and shawl on, and the sight of her white, desperate face added fuel to the flame of the doctor's ire.

"I await your pleasure, madam," he said; and, with a start, she rose and bade her hostess good-bye, and followed the doctor out.

Not a word was spoken during the short drive. The chill winds met them at every turn, whirling the dun crisp leaves high overhead, and stinging the pale woman with their icy breath; but she did not seem to heed either the bitter wind or Dr. Gay's bitter silence, but sat tranced in her own mysterious thoughts, which she never asked the angry little man to share.

Once only she roused herself, it was when they were passing through the lodge-gates, when, for the first time, a fine view of the grand old castle opened before them.

She bent forward and regarded the hoary pile from the turreted roof to the buttress stone, and a flash of scorn and hatred broke from her eyes and wreathed her lips with the unworded sneer.

"It is something to plot for, I suppose," she murmured to herself. "It has its fascination for such a man."

"Beg pardon, Miss Walsingham, did you speak?" asked the doctor, sulksily.

"Yes, my friend; I was assuring myself that

yonder fine building was enough to rouse the envy of a covetous nature," she returned. "But we shan't permit any foul play, shall we?"

She looked up with a strange smile; it was cruel and derisive, and the little doctor subsided into uneasy silence, and stared hard at her all the rest of the way.

When they came to the door, Mr. Purcell, the steward, and Mrs. Chetwode, the housekeeper, bustled out to welcome the heiress home, and conducted her in with the greatest deference.

She turned on the threshold and looked down at the doctor, who was sullenly mounting his gig again.

"Tell Colonel Brand that his next visit to me must take place in my castle," she said, "and that I hope to meet him suitably, and to repay his devotion as it deserves."

She vanished within the gloomy portal, and Dr. Gay carried the message to Colonel Brand, who swore a great oath that the girl had both sense and spirit, and, with her castle to boot, would not make a bad speculation.

So his next visit was paid at the old castle, and Margaret led him through the length and breadth of it, and sought to trap him into blundering over its various rooms; and he answered all her questions correctly, and comported himself with perfection as St. Udo Brand, and left her in the evening, still and moody, thinking out her next secret move to snare him.

### CHAPTER XIII.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,  
Over the face of the leaden sun;  
The noble nature within him stirred  
To life at that woman's dead and word.

J. G. Whittier.

ST. UDO BRAND was walking with Margaret over the rustling leaves fallen from the Norman oaks, and beguiling the time by recounting his adventures.

How minutely he described his small part in the great wild drama of carnage! How feelingly he touched on the sorrows of war; how enthusiastically he extolled the valour of his men.

The whole tissue of events was reproduced with such marvellous accuracy, that Margaret was dumb with secret wonder.

How could one living being rehearse so faithfully the part of another?

Events which had been minutely described in his letters to the executors were now detailed with the most copious explanations, whilst allusions to his former life as a guardsman, and to incidents of his youth, kept her in continual mind of his genuineness.

He was constantly throwing little proofs of his identity in her way, and surrounding himself with a halo of reality, and yet—and yet—

Margaret paced over the crisp brown leaves, whirling round her footstep in the bleak November wind, her eyes ever and anon turning upon her companion in troubled scrutiny, her ear intent to catch each syllable.

"How these old creaking oaks bring back to me my boyhood! What bright dreams of glory filled my brain! What a life mine was to be! I was to go forth and conquer; all men were to bow before St. Udo Brand; beauty was to yield and find its level at my feet. But see me, Miss Walsingham—no longer a dream-dazzled boy. A man at his prime! Where are my brilliant prospects now? My visions of fame—of love—of happiness? Lost in the quicksand of Time. Is there in the whole world a more useless, ruined man than myself? I am famous but for my misdeeds. My intellect has been squandered upon worthless objects; love has cheated me; I have sold my birthright for a mess of pottage."

Margaret could not respond to this half-candid, half-bitter appeal.

How often she had imagined just such words in the mouth of St. Udo Brand, with yearning thrill as if Heaven itself would have been opened to her.

But now that the time had come, she shrank from the man and his loneliness and his half-remonstrance in cold unsympathy.

How dare he come to her with his polluted life!

She read the false and shifting eyes with a loathsome shudder and a hardening of the lip.

"You false man!" thought the girl, with fiercely clenched hand. "How dare you think to step into St. Udo's shoes and expect to cheat me?"

"It is strange that Colonel Brand should be so dissatisfied with his laurels," she said, with cold scorn. "One would have thought that the reputation which he gained for bravery and intrepidity as a commander would have staked his thirst for fame. Perhaps you fear that the laurels of a whole army would not cover your deficiencies?"

She placed such unconscious emphasis on the "you," that the colonel turned his face upon her with close attention.

She saw the startled eye, though it instantly

wavered from hers, and she felt the lagging of his feet.

"Is there no possibility of trapping him out of his own mouth?" she thought. "Can I not force him to betray himself?"

Women are apt at resources; they cannot surmount great difficulties—their muscles are so soft and their brains so repressed by convention and circumstance, but they can vault over slighter obstacles with lightning quickness, while the man's slower strength is culminating for the heights.

"I know but little of St. Udo," pondered Margaret, "but I will traverse with this man every inch of the ground of which I am mistress, and if he is false surely he must fail in something. Let me set trap the first."

"As we pass this lodge a certain association comes into my mind," she said, always with that cold scorn breaking through her enforced courtesy; "and now that I am honoured by having you to refer to, I shall bring my difficulty for your solution. How was dear Miss Brand choked by a parasite?"

The colonel stared blankly. An uneasy frown stole up to his forehead; once, twice, he opened his lips to speak, but checked himself and waited.

The silence became too threatening on the part of Margaret; she was forced to lead the next step.

"You seem to be utterly confounded, sir. I would not have asked you the question if I had not had your own word that such was the case."

"May I ask you, my dear Miss Walsingham, may I ask to what you refer?"

"You feign forgetfulness. Fie, Colonel Brand, is it possible that the few words which have passed between us could have slipped your memory? Perhaps you will profess yourself unable to explain to me the term 'fortune-hunter,' as applied in connection with me, also?"

The blank change deepened on the soldier's sallow countenance, then a certain film covered the wandering eyes, like those of an eagle before the too-bright sun.

"Miss Walsingham, whoever informed you of me using any such invincible term in connection with you, traduced me."

"You never used the word, then?"

"On my honour as a gentleman, no."

"Ha," cried Margaret, with a flash of triumph, "then you utterly deny having ever written to me?"

A scowl, withering as fire, crossed the colonel's face, and a furtive glare at his daring opponent made her shudder, though he did not see it.

"You refer to the unlucky note I was insane enough to write to you, the night upon which I left Castle Brand?" he inquired, slowly coming out of his perplexity. "I had forgotten its contents."

"Most extraordinary that you should forget its contents, Colonel Brand. Then you can explain nothing, and I must expect no apology for the bitterest insult which you could have passed upon one in my position."

"Dear Miss Walsingham, I—I meant no insult. Please do not take it as such."

She laughed a taunting, irritating laugh; she could not have treated him with more contempt.

"So brave to bark! so timid to bite!" she jibed. "Oh, Colonel Brand, that is so unlike the daring spirit of the Brands, which scorned to cringe, that I am almost tempted to believe you some changeling."

Some white indentations came upon the livid face of Colonel Brand; for an instant it seemed as if in his murderous wrath he would smite the girl to the earth, but he quailed as soon as her glittering eyes were fixed upon him, and spoke, though with a thick and husky tone.

"Is it generous thus to trample upon a fallen man? You can see—all who ever met me before I left England, can see how much I am changed by these past months, not to speak of the wounds which reduced me to a skeleton, and aged me, as five years would have failed to do. All this tells upon a man's spirits, Miss Walsingham; and I am quite ready to confess that I have lost much of my bravado, and my insolent manner of riding on fortune's neck, as if I could ever expect to stay there."

"You speak as bitterly of yourself, as if you were your bitterest enemy!"

The colonel looked up at the dim sky with that peculiar stare of his.

"I have been my own bitterest enemy, I fear. If I had been less insolent, less arrogant, and snorting—"with a dark lock of hatred up at the sky—"I might have been the owner of Seven Oak Waste at this present moment, instead of—of where I am."

Margaret looked at him in a sort of horrified fascination. That he was carried out of himself and spoke of the dead, she was dimly conscious; that the malevolent power which brought him here as suitor might also make him master, became to her dimly conscious too. She trembled before the depths of a hideous possibility.

"But about this letter," said Colonel Brand, coming again out of his moodiness, and smoothing the ugly seams out of his face, "I do not feel inclined to

leave the subject until I have set myself in at least a more tolerable light before your eyes."

He pulled his handkerchief with a flourish out of his pocket, to flick a cobweb off Margaret's sleeve, which she had brushed from a bush twenty minutes since, and as he did so, a small note-book fell to the ground.

"Why had he not brushed the cobweb off before?"

"I am sure that you will acknowledge that under the circumstances,"—here he stopped to pick up the note-book—"disappointment might drive me to say anything,"—he idly turned over the leaves of the book as if searching for something—"and I was really so astonished at my grandmother's will that surprise seemed to take away my sense. The idea of insinuating that you had stepped in fraudulently, and been the parasites which choked her! And that allusion to Paolo Orsini strangling his wife—upon my honour as a gentleman, I humbly beg your pardon! Ah, this is what I was looking for, the autograph of General Garibaldi. Can you read characters by writing, or do you care to examine it, Miss Walsingham?"

She took the book from him at arm's length, and looked silently at the name.

"The general wrote that in my memorandum-book as a pass-word on one occasion that I was on a secret embassy. The rough scrawl has often saved my life since."

Margaret shut the memorandum-book, looked carefully at each cover, and handed it back.

"Trap the first has failed!" she thought. "He is too clever for me. But I am not daunted yet. A green morocco cover with silver clasps, and the Brand crest in gilt. Yes, I shall know it again, and some time I shall find out why you dropped it among the withered leaves, if woman's wit can match man's cunning."

"I can read characters very well sometimes," she replied to the watchful colonel's last remark, "but not by their writing."

They were nearing the house, and Margaret turned aside from the main entrance to a glass door in the next wing.

"Now for trap the second."

"I am going into the library for a book," she said; "that is if the glass door is open."

Colonel Brand stepped gallantly to the door by which the heir-expectant had stood during the reading of the will, and shook it.

"Locked," he announced, smilingly.

"You ought to be master of the secret of that lock," returned Margaret, also smiling, but chilly as an arctic glacier, "for if the legends of the place be not overdrawn, this suite of rooms was devoted exclusively to St. Udo Brand when a boy, and the glass entrance was used by him instead of the principal door. It is extraordinary that St. Udo when a man should have forgotten so completely the incidents of his childhood."

"I am ashamed of my stupidity in keeping a lady waiting so long in the cold wind," said the colonel, standing with his face to the door, "but before I spoke, I had remarked that the old lock of my childish memory had been removed, and some patent arrangement put in its place which resists my clumsy efforts."

"It is the same arrangement," retorted Margaret, with glittering eyes, "that has been upon the door for thirty years. Mrs. Brand said so, and Mr. Davenport can vouch for it. This is a strange mistake of yours, Colonel Brand."

Again these spots appeared on the colonel's livid face, like fingermarks of the evil one, and he stole a look of mingled fear and fury at his tormentor. Not trusting himself to speak he shook the door savagely.

"Still wrong," said Margaret, mercilessly. "Past experience ought to have taught you that shaking it only sends the bolts surer home. See."

She pressed the spring of the disputed lock, and the glass leaves slid open.

"Trap the second successful!"

"Now," she said, turning within the room, and looking down at him with her pallid and scornful face, "I have a fancy to know how far this aberration of mind exists with you. Will you permit me to amuse myself with an experiment? Will you let me stand here while you stand without, and describe to me the scene which passed upon the occasion of our first meeting in this room?"

She put a hand upon each leaf of the door, and formed of herself a barrier, as if her woman's strength could shut him out of Castle Brand, and her gray eyes glowed with a new and fierce emotion which her simple heart had never known of before this man came home to claim his own.

"Madam," said the colonel, gnawing the head of his cane, like a dog at the end of his chain, "it is not at all astonishing that I should have forgotten the peculiarities of an old glass door, even though I often used it in my boyhood; other and graver memories might easily displace such trivialities, and I never professed to cherish the old associations of Castle Brand with much reverence. But the

scene of our first meeting can never escape my recollection. It is cruel of you to recall the most abject moment of my life, but since you insist upon it, I cannot choose but obey.

"You came out of the shadow of St. George, after the reading of the will by Davenport, and at the polite little doctor's introduction, I was ungallant enough to indulge in unseemly laughter, and to exclaim: 'Ye gods! What a Medusa!' at which—shall I ever forget your superb indignation!—you gathered your skirts and swept like a queen from the room. My dear madam, do I describe the scene accurately? It is not every woman who would have had the nerve to call up such a scene as that from the depths of memory; I must confess I admire your courage and—shall I say?—your incredulity!"

He bowed sardonically. The ugly seams, so suggestive of crime and cunning, had come back upon his brow, as he doffed his hat; the twitching face bore a smile of triumph, which revealed how sure he felt of victory.

"Trap the third has signally failed," thought Margaret; "this part at least of St. Udo's history has been well studied. Ah, he will be too clever for me!"

She dropped her hands from the leaves of the door and stood aside, while a slight increase of pallor stole over her face.

"You have satisfied me, Colonel Brand. Come in, if you please."

He silently entered, and with one accord, these two people, who were tacitly drawing together their forces for a deadly conflict, turned and eyed each other: she with stern, unflinching defiance; he with a quailing, yet impudent look of confident success.

In that dumb scrutiny, they seemed to be measuring each other's capabilities.

"Miss Walsingham," said the colonel, after this strange pause, "I can see that you have taken a deep animosity against me, probably because of my treatment of my grandmother's will; we shall suppose it is. Now, my dear young lady, I shall try to explain myself and to set myself right with you, so that in the future we may perfectly understand each other. I have come back to my native land determined to obey, if possible, that part of the will which refers to me—determined to try my best to win Miss Walsingham's regard—determined to make it no fault of mine if the name of Brand is forgotten. Knowing these three things to be my set purposes, are you willing to forgive generously what the meaner-minded of your sex could not forgive, and to drop the past between us? Are you willing that we should be friends?"

With his head on one side, and his eyes watchfully taking note of his listener's face, he bent forward with a certain veiled significance, and clasped her hand.

"Away!" cried Margaret, shaking him off as she would have shaken off a reptile, and regarding him in a perfect passion of horror, "do you dare to expect that I could enter into a compact with you?"

Something crept into his eyes which made her shudder.

"I have asked you to forgive my former insults, and you have refused," he said; "but remember, I asked you to enter into no compact with me. All the world is at liberty to know that St. Udo Brand repented of his foolishness, and came home to carry out his grandmother's will. If the world believes anything else of me, I shall know that Margaret Walsingham not only refused to be my friend, but cast off all obligations to the dead and became my enemy. The Brands of Brand Castle have ever been famous for their ferocity. I shall be sorry if a woman should fall a prey to it."

"I will never wrong St. Udo Brand," said the meek woman, suddenly looking at him with blazing eyes, "but I will guard Ethel Brand's dying wishes from being fraudulently represented, whoever dares to fraudulently represent them."

"And I, deeply impressed by the conviction that Seven Oak Waste will fall ultimately into the possession of its rightful heir—that is myself—intend to permit no fair lady's frown to turn me from my ancestor's doors."

Again they gazed at each other—deeper horror and passionate determination in her eyes, darker folds of sin and cunning on his brow, while a smile played round his wicked mouth, fatal as the blasting lightning.

"You shall have to weather the frowns of more than me before you are the master of this castle," said Margaret.

"Is that a declaration of war?"

He tried in his wrath and apprehension to catch her hand again, but she slid with a gasp out of his reach and passed through the door.

"You ask if I have made a declaration of war," said Margaret, turning when the length of the hall was between them; "and I am not afraid to say—yes. If there be a hidden page in your life which you would keep from me, tremble for your chances of Brand Castle."

She vanished from his gaze, and the fitful wind swept from door to door of the library with the howl of a hundred furies.

Mrs. Chetwode, who was busy in the pantry which faced the library, thought to herself that she had never seen such an evil-looking face as that which looked out of the half-closed door for full five minutes.

The eyes became small and crafty; the forehead receded and narrowed to a Mongolian size; the mouth drooped with a wolf-like ferocity; infinitesimal wrinkles, not often seen there, dawned into view like the folds of the deadly cobra before its spring.

"Heaven preserve me!" interjected the housekeeper, turning her back upon the unholy vision; "I do think Colonel Brand the wickedest-looking man ever I saw. Heaven send poor Miss Margaret a better husband."

Meantime Margaret, struck with a mortal panic, was walking fast down the road to Regis, quite unmindful of the calls of etiquette which prescribed for her the part of hostess to the visitor.

She left the Waste with its grim, bare trees and its battlemented towers behind her; she left the lodge, clinging to its nook of ivy wall, behind her; she tried to shake off the terror which oppressed her, and drank in the freshening gusts of wind as if her throat had been constrained by an iron hand.

"What have I dared to do?" she thought. "Have I thrown the gauntlet of defiance at him? And if he takes it up, what will become of me? But to imagine he could personate the brave St. Udo! Reptile!" she exclaimed, with a suddenly clenched hand, "I could crush you beneath my heel. You have no right to live, you monster!"

Faster she walked, although she was so weak with her recent ill-health that her limbs trembled beneath her; and in the urgent alarm which had taken possession of her, she proceeded straight through the village to the law-office of Mr. Davenport.

"My dear lady," ejaculated that functionary, arising in consternation, "what brings you here? I hope nothing annoying has occurred; but you do look very badly."

"Mr. Davenport, will you send for Dr. Gay? I have something of importance to communicate to you both."

"Certainly—certainly. I'll send immediately. No, I'll go myself. You won't object to sitting by my nice warm fire here until I come back? And I'll look you in, if you like."

"I don't object." In a very short time the two executors entered, both breathing hard, and each having an anxious air about him.

"Good day, my dear Miss Walsingham," said the little doctor, drawing a chair close beside her; "I hear you have something on your mind to tell us. I think you might have sent for us, instead of walking here in your state of health; it scarcely looks well, my dear, especially—especially as it is you, my dear."

"I cannot help it. What I have to say outweighs in importance the trivial question of whether I come to you or you visit me. You both, I have no doubt, were surprised at the manner in which I insisted on leaving your house, Dr. Gay, and taking up my abode at Seven Oak Waste?"

Both executors admitted that they had been surprised, very much surprised.

"I had a secret reason for my course of action," continued the ward, looking from one to the other, "which I did not feel at liberty to divulge until I had assured myself whether the motives that actuated me were just or not. I am now assured that they were, and I desire to divulge them to you, that you may prevent a fraud."

"My dear," said the lawyer, "isn't all this going to lead us to Colonel Brand?"

"It is going to lead you to the man whom I left at Seven Oak Waste."

"Is the Colonel at Seven Oak Waste?"

"Yes."

"And you here?"

"In spite of etiquette—yes."

The two executors looked at each other as if prepared to hear anything after this.

"Have you made a deed of gift of Seven Oaks to St. Udo, and are you here for more legal instruments?" asked Mr. Davenport.

"You have not fathomed my secret at all," answered Margaret in a repressed tone, though she was in a state of high excitement: "when I wilfully left the shelter and the protection of your house, Dr. Gay, it was to fulfil that clause of the will which says, 'Should St. Udo Brand or Margaret Walsingham die within the year, the property shall revert to the survivor.' I left your house to take possession of Castle Brand."

The executors stared.

"But, my dear girl, St. Udo is not dead," said Dr. Gay, deprecatingly.

"Good gracious, what do you mean?" exclaimed the lawyer. "You may take the property by refusing to marry the colonel, or you may keep the property by quarrelling with him and making him glad to leave you, but you can't take the property on the plea of his death, when he is by your own showing sitting in Castle Brand at this moment."

"That brings me to my accusation," cried Margaret, almost wildly; "I have convinced myself that the person who has come here in the semblance of St. Udo Brand, to woo me, and to be in time the master of Seven Oak Waste, is a villain who has weighed well the risks he runs—is, in short, an impostor!"

"Good Heavens!" gasped the physician.

"Your proofs, madam," demanded the lawyer, with another, and a larger, pinch of snuff.

(To be continued.)

## ROUND THE WORLD.

### CHAPTER XXXIX.

ROLAND'S first act, in pursuance of his plans, was to send Lily below. There was nothing in his looks or manner to excite suspicion that anything was wrong, and Lily wonderingly but unquestioningly obeyed him.

"I'll be down soon and explain my reasons," whispered the youth, as she arose from her seat on the rim of the skylight. "Go into your own room, Lily. You'll find the jacket I want mended lying in your berth."

Lily descended to her state-room at once, and Roland began sauntering idly to and fro, extending his rambles to the forecastle, where he was a general favourite. Every member of the crew liked him for his frank and pleasant disposition, for the suffering he had encountered at the hands of Captain Stocks, whose name they cordially detested, and because, though well educated and well bred, he yet treated them all with friendly familiarity, neither holding himself aloof from them nor acting as if feeling himself their superior.

Several men were in the forecastle, some engaged in mending garments, others busily scouring shells that had picked up during their wanderings, and others were lounging idly in their berths. All looked up at the youth's entrance, and one of the men offered him a seat on his chest.

"We ain't seen much of you lately," said this man, as he sewed industriously at a huge seat. "Ain't you gettin' set up there in the cabin?"

"Not I," laughed Roland. "I am not so easy set against my friends."

"Friends!" sneered another from his berth. "What friendship has the likes of you got for us? You'd be down upon us as quick as anybody."

The speaker arose and came forward.

He was the ringleader of the mutineers, the sworn enemy of Captain Wilcox—the man Talbot.

He was the very type of a Sandwich Islander, yet so tall, and burly, and muscular as to seem gigantic. He had the pale, yellow complexion, high cheek bones, and Malay features peculiar to his race. His eyes were small, and burned with a restless, quivering fire, and about his mouth lingered an habitual expression of anger and disdain. He was a man to be dreaded and feared. His enmity once awakened would never die until he had wreaked a full revenge. That he was proud of his great strength was plainly apparent. That he would never forgive the man who had conquered that strength and thrashed him as if he had been a child, Roland felt an instantaneous and positive conviction.

Having the key now to his enmity, the youth knew that Talbot had shipped on the *Andromeda* for purposes of revenge.

He shuddered inwardly before the man's piercing, half-scoffing gaze, but replied, still laughing:

"I don't blame anybody for not liking to work. I hate work myself too much for that. I like a wild life, and adventure, and excitement, and danger, but deliver me from downright hard work."

He spoke with such apparent sincerity and energy that the sailors all laughed, and even Talbot smiled.

The latter seated himself on the edge of a berth opposite the youth, rested his chin on his hands, his elbows on his knees, and continued to regard the visitor, but less searchingly than before.

"It's all well enough for you to talk," he muttered. "You're the son of a rich man, and ain't obliged to work. You've got nothing in common with such as us."

Roland had planned his part well. Lily's life and those of the captain, the mates, as well as his own were at stake. He was resolved to play the part he had assumed without weakness or faltering.

"I don't know what you mean by saying I am the son of a rich man," he said, with apparent bitterness of feeling. "You needn't twit me to my face with being nobody—"

Talbot interrupted him with a cry of astonishment.

"Why," he exclaimed, "they say that you and your sister are children of a rich English nob—a regular millionaire! Ain't it so?"

"Lily's father's rich," replied Roland, with well-feigned reluctance. "But I ain't his son. I'm only a boy he picked up and adopted. I don't know what my name is, nor who I am, nor if I have a relative in the world. I am an adventurer all through, you see."

His face was pale as he made this confession, and there was a cold dew on his forehead. Despite the course he had marked out for himself, it was hard to tell his hidden history to those evil-minded men. His emotion attested his sincerity, and no one of his listeners doubted his story.

"So you and the girl are not relations," commented Talbot. "Well, you don't look a bit alike. You're dark, with brown eyes and black hair—Spaniard for looks—and she's the daintiest little piece of flesh and blood I ever set eyes on. She comes up to my ideas of angels. The man that gets her for a wife will be a happy fellow, eh?"

He laughed hoarsely, but looked keenly and furtively at Roland.

The youth exhibited no sign of emotion, although his blood surged angrily through his veins, and the muscles of his hand contracted, and he longed to dash his fist into the fellow's sneering face. He answered by a forced laugh, and a muttered assent.

"When you get home, the girl's father'll turn you off, most likely," said Talbot, growing more social. "Why go home at all, young man? There's gold to be had, for the picking up, by the cartload in California. Why not stop there on the return voyage?"

"I should like to!" declared Roland, with apparent warmth. "Is the ship going to stop at a port in California? I thought that was out of our course. The captain said he should stop at Honolulu!"

Talbot bit his lip, cursing his indiscretion, and one or two of the others whispered their annoyance to each other.

"I vote for stopping," said Roland, after an awkward pause. "I should like to make a fortune to carry back with me. But what could I do with Lily? A girl would be a drawback in the gold-diggings. How could I get rid of her?"

Although affecting not to look at Talbot, Roland noticed that his eyes sparkled and his face flushed with a strange eagerness. His love for Lily opened the youth's eyes to the meaning of these indications. The fellow had dared to lift his eyes to Lily—had dared to think of winning her to be his wife!

Roland almost choked in his sudden wrath, yet he was obliged to veil his anger and indignation under a light and careless mien.

But in his inmost soul he registered a vow that Lily and he would perish in the sea together, before she should be left to the persecutions of this malignant being, whose very aspect was a terror.

"I find I was mistaken about stopping on the California coast," observed Talbot, after a pause. "I wish the captain would do so, but he's a man to do as he likes. You won't make your fortune this voyage, lad, unless you stop at Honolulu and ship from there."

He spoke with affected carelessness, and as if dismissing the subject. He then leaned back in his berth, dropping his head on the pillow, and continuing to regard Roland lazily through his half-shut eyes.

The youth was about to make some fresh remark, intended to further elicit the confidence of Talbot and his confederates, when the door opened, and Captain Wilcox, with his peculiarly nervous movements, looked in.

His brow darkened at sight of Roland, who returned his glance with one of apparent defiance.

"You here!" cried the captain, testily. "The forecastle's no place for you. I'll thank you to stay in the cabin, young man, and not come among the crew, setting them a bad example by the sight of your laziness."

"I don't know that I'm doing any harm here," replied Roland, with a flash of spirit. "If the men don't want me here, they can say so."

"You can come in here as much as you please!" said Talbot, lifting himself on his elbow, and glaring at the captain.

"I believe I'm commander of this vessel," responded the captain, boldly enough, yet inwardly uncertain how far he might go in carrying out Roland's instructions. "Walk out of this forecastle, young man!"

"I'll go when I am ready," answered Roland, coolly.

"Since you are so fond of the forecastle, stay here then!" cried Captain Wilcox. "We're short of hands, as you know. If you choose to associate with the crew, trying to breed disturbances, stay here altogether. You are not fit to have charge

of your sister, and, from this moment I take her under my own charge."

"It takes two to agree to that, captain," exclaimed Roland. "As to making a sailor of me, I think you can't do it."

"We'll see," said the commander, apparently exasperated beyond endurance. "Come here, sir!"

He grasped Roland by the coat-collar, and dragged him, struggling, fighting, and muttering threats, upon the deck.

The little farce had been so well acted that the crew were completely deceived.

There was a momentary disturbance in the forecastle. One or two men were eager to defend Roland and take him from the captain. Tallot half arose, his eyes flashing, his teeth grating harshly, but he fell back, saying:

"After all, the lad's got the real stuff in him! I'll bet he hates the captain enough to kill him. Just wait, boys. Don't be rash. It's most time to spring. We'll see the lad again first."

Meanwhile, the captain led Roland on deck and ordered him to go aloft to reeve a rope, an order which the youth peremptorily refused to execute, declaring that he was no sailor, but a passenger. The captain replied that his war was not a passenger ship, and that he would have no shirkers on board. The wordy contest waxed fast and furious. The jolly mate, serious enough now, having been informed by Mr. Hopkins of the appalling danger menacing them, looked on, apprehensive that affairs might only be precipitated by Roland's rage. The watch gathered around, all in sympathy with the youth, and speaking freely their dislike of the captain.

At last, Roland made his escape from the grasp of the commander and darted towards the companion-way. At its head, he encountered Tallot, who had come on deck some minutes previous, and who now whispered:

"Come to the forecastle to-night, after eight bells has struck."

Before Roland could reply other than by a nod, Tallot had sauntered off.

The youth descended to the cabin, passing into Lily's room. The young girl was looking out of her window, very quiet and thoughtful, a shadow on her lovely, spirited face.

Her work lay completed in her berth.

"Come in, Roland," she said, as he looked in. "I am anxious to know why you sent me down to do what could as well have been done on deck. I heard a scuffling of feet and loud, angry voices. One of them sounded like yours. What is the matter?"

Roland closed the door, approached the maiden, and took her hand.

"Can you bear more trouble, Lily?" he whispered, tenderly. "Or have you become timid with all you have borne?"

"There is trouble ahead, then?" inquired Lily, with a start. "Your presentiment has come true, then? Tell me the truth, Roland—the whole truth."

"Will you be strong and brave, darling?" asked Roland, looking steadily down into her face. "A moment of weakness would ruin us."

Lily lifted her eyes, in which shone a brave and steady light, and exhibited a countenance pale but heroic.

"Roland," she said, quietly, "we have passed through many dangers together. I have not been a coward yet. I may be little more than a child in many respects, but in courage I am a woman."

"True, darling. Forgive me for seeming to doubt your courage now. But this is a danger of which we have never dreamed. I am myself appalled by it."

"What is it?" she demanded, in a whisper.

Roland waited a moment and then whispered the dread word in her ear:

"Mutiny!"

Lily's face grew paler and her eyes had a frightened expression, but she uttered no cry or ejaculation.

"The captain has an enemy on board, one of the sailors," continued Roland, holding tightly the two little fluttering hands. "This enemy is the tall, yellow giant you spoke of the other day. The captain punished him once on shore and he vowed a fearful revenge. The crew were all inclined to desert at Honolulu, on account of a report of gold having been found in California, and three sailors actually deserted. Three men came on board to engage themselves at dusk the same day, and the captain engaged them in a hurry. One was Tallot, the captain's enemy. He has been to work at the minds of the crew, already disaffected, and has nearly, if not quite, won them over to mutiny."

"And the scuffle on deck?" whispered Lily. "Has not this mutiny broken out?"

In reply, Roland detailed the events that had transpired since he had been sent below, and Lily listened breathlessly until he had concluded.

"They will then take you into their counsels," said Lily. "If they succeed, they will kill the captain and Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Biggs. Perhaps

they will detect your double-dealing, and kill us all. Suppose you fail—and I suppose you are working to prevent the mutiny—what will become of me?"

She asked the question calmly, but Roland scarcely knew how to reply.

"I should be the only woman on board, among a crowd of riotous, successful mutineers," continued Lily, still quietly. "I am only a weak young girl, helpless to defend myself. What will they do with me?"

"Tallot wants to make you his wife?" whispered Roland, under his breath.

The sweet, pale face grew paler still, and the little hands fluttered yet more wildly, yet Lily asked gently:

"And you, Roland—what shall you do with me?"

A strange light leaped to the youth's eyes, and he answered, solemnly:

"Lily, if the worst comes to the worst, we will jump into the sea together. Living or dying, we shall not be separated. I shall never let you fall into hands other than mine."

A look that was almost content passed over Lily's face, and she smiled at him with a tender confidingness that was inexpressibly touching.

Roland struggled a moment with an agitation that swept like a tornado over his soul, and then he said:

"Lily, we are in great peril. My feeble efforts to save us may avail nothing. The mutineers may have detected my ruse, and be planning to entrap me. This may be our last talk together."

Lily bowed her head in silent assent.

"When we left home," continued the young man, "we were children. I was a boy, with the heart of a man, and I loved you, Lily, as men love. You were a gay, bright, frolicsome child, with a quaint wisdom that has not forsaken you. I loved you in those days with a wild idolatry. I cherished your words, your smiles, your cast-off toys, as priceless gems. On the very afternoon you were stolen away, I told you of my love, and you promised some day to be my wife. Yet your love for me was but sisterly, dear Lily. You were not old enough to comprehend the love that is deeper and holier and grander than a sister's love—the love that induces one to forsake all else to cleave to one nearer and dearer than relatives."

Lily drooped her head, and a burning blush gathered in her pure cheeks.

"We were carried from our home," resumed Roland, not relaxing his grasp on Lily's hands. "I was speedily forced from boyhood into manhood. It was for a long time my care to preserve in you your artless childlike, to prolong as far as possible your childhood. But the years have gone on, and your intellect has ripened, your character widened and deepened, and you are now almost at the threshold of womanhood. It is two years since we left home. You are past sixteen years of age. Lily, is your heart still the childish one that gave me a sister's calm affection? I have fancied of late that you have changed towards me."

He spoke with a passionate intonation that found its way to Lily's heart. He looked at her with a glance that tried to read her soul. He was so grave, with a tinge of that sternness that had been awakened in him by his many perils and which had now become a part of his character. He was so noble, so passionate, so tender. Lily had known him all her life, but she shrank from him shyly now, strange emotions flooding her young soul, and the strong kindling and fading in her cheeks.

"I have spoken too soon," said Roland, in a tone of keen disappointment and self-reproach. "I meant to wait, but this danger and the near prospect of death hurried me on. Forgive me, darling. We will still be brother and sister. Forget what I have said, and remember only that I will defend you with my life!"

Lily forced herself to look up, shyly and timidly. Roland read her soul in her eyes, and gathered her to his heart with a solemn and ineffable joy, pressing his betrothal kiss upon her lips.

There were no rapturous exclamations—no transports. Danger was around them, a palpable presence. Death might be lurking near. They sat thus awhile, Lily's head pillow on the throbbing heart of her lover, both silent, wrapped in a blissful communion too holy for words.

They were aroused at last by a low and cautious knock at the door, and the captain's whispered request that Roland should come to his room for further consultation.

"Have no fears, darling," said the young man, gently releasing her from his clasp. "Leave it all to me. We will live together, or die together!"

He went out of the room, leaving her to thoughts strangely sweet, and to the consciousness of an awful peril which had lost for her its worst terrors.

#### CHAPTER XL.

CAPTAIN WILCOX, his mates, and passengers, waited anxiously for the approach of evening. The

day passed without any outbreak on the part of the crew. The sailors clustered together, and were frequently observed in secret consultations, and were heard to mutter strange and terrible threats, but no notice was taken of their mutinous behaviour. Tallot, the gigantic ringleader of the insurrection, stalked the decks, without putting a hand to a task. He seemed particularly occupied in watching Roland and the captain, who both spent much time on deck, and appeared more than ever at swords'-points with each other.

Satisfied at last that Roland was abused by the skipper, and that he harboured angry and revengeful feelings, the man gave over his scrutiny, and just before midnight retired to his quarters in the forecastle.

There were left on deck but two men, one at the helm, the other acting as sentinel. The duty of the latter was to pace to and fro, and keep vigilant watch upon the officers of the ship.

The second mate, whose watch it was, came down in dismay to report these demonstrations. He declared it to be his opinion that the mutiny was on the point of breaking out.

"I think so too," remarked the captain, his ruddy face becoming pale and determined. "They have thrown off all idea of obedience to the laws of the ship, or the authority of the ship's officers. Have they secured the arms yet?"

Mr. Biggs replied in the negative.

"If but two of their men are on deck, now is your time to secure the arms," said Roland. "You can overcome the two men without disturbance, while I am in the forecastle. The arms once in our possession, we have one advantage at least on our side."

His brisk, cheerful manner inspired the captain with energy.

"We will make the attempt," he said. "Better to be killed fighting. My wife shall not be left a widow, and my children fatherless, without a struggle on my part!"

"I'll do my best," said the melancholy first mate, gloomily. "Not but that I expect to be shot, or walk the plank, just the same."

"I'll die fighting!" cried Mr. Biggs, his round face assuming a resolute expression.

"It is about time for me to keep my appointment," said Roland, looking at his watch. "I must see my sister once more."

He moved towards Lily's state-room, knocked, and entered.

He did not come out until eight-bells had struck, and the three officers in the cabin observed, when he finally made his appearance, that his face was pale, and that his eyes were intensely dark, and the lids were swollen, as though he had been weeping.

A moment spent at his toilette-stand, in his own room, removed all traces of tears, and he came out quiet, calm, and self-possessed, full of a stern resolution.

"I am going up now," he said. "You had better follow me to the deck as soon as practicable, gag the two men, and seize the arms. Bring the men below. We may need them as hostages."

"A capital idea!" said Mr. Biggs. "One of them is Tallot's brother, who came aboard with him, just before we left Honolulu, you know."

The captain nodded assent.

He had grown to rely greatly upon Roland's keen and ready wit, and it was the youth, in fact, that commanded the little force.

Roland ascended to the deck alone. The man was at the helm, as Mr. Biggs had stated, and another individual, Tallot's brother—a lean, slender and wiry islander—was walking the deck.

He came upon Roland near the head of the companion-way, and reminded him that he was being waited for in the forecastle.

The youth nodded and passed on.

The night was neither dark nor brilliantly light. The sky was full of hazy clouds that moved swiftly through the heavens, their edges sharply defined against the distant blue. A few stars peeped out. A glimmer of moonlight now and then was visible behind the light clouds, and fell with spectral effect upon the rippling waters. There was a hazy gloom over the whole wild scene.

The wind was fresh, and the ship was straining under a cloud of canvas.

There was something in the night in consonance with the spirit of the mutineers. It had a depressing effect on Roland's sensitive spirit, and he could scarcely shake it off as he boldly entered the forecastle.

The room was dimly lighted, and the crew, some twenty-six in number, were seated in groups, some smoking pipes, some chewing tobacco, and all absorbed in a speech of Tallot's.

The tall, giant islander was in the midst of the group. A jug of whisky was beside him, and it was evident that the beverage had already been

plentifully, distributed, the men's faces being flushed, and their speech thick and indistinct.

Talbot stopped as Roland entered, greeted him with a wolfish sort of smile, and motioned him to a seat near him.

"We expected you before, my hearty," he remarked, cordially. "Has old Wilcox tried to put a stopper on you?"

"No; and he hadn't better try it," replied Roland, with a swagger, as he sat down on the chest indicated.

The sailor laughed.

"You've got the real grit in you, my bantam," he exclaimed. "You and the captain have been having it hot and heavy all day; but I don't see as he got far ahead of you. So you don't like to work, eh, and won't work either?"

"Not without I'm going to get the benefit of it," was the reply.

"Good for you, lad. Take a drink, and be sociable."

And Talbot pushed the jug towards the youth.

Roland declined, asserting that drink went to his head; and he did not like the taste of it.

Talbot bantered him a little, called him a milk-sop, and finally drank the beverage in his stead.

"I've been telling the boys," said Talbot, when he had imbibed sufficient to give him the feeling of a monarch, "how the captain's been down on you, and how you've jawed him to his face. You've got pluck enough, lad. I shouldn't think you'd stand his treatment of you?"

"Do you suppose I would if I could help myself?" demanded Roland. "Haven't I said I'd have revenge? I will have revenge. Did you see him jerk me out of this room by my collar this morning? No man'll strike me twice—not if I know it!"

Talbot's eyes flashed, fairly emitting sparks. He ground his teeth together as a beast of prey might do, and his breath came in hurried gasps.

The words of Roland had touched a sore wound.

"That's the way I feel!" he ejaculated, bringing his hand down heavily on the chest beside him. "Captain Wilcox had me down once and nearly took my skin off, all for saying something to a pretty island girl that she didn't happen to fancy. I swore then that the day would come for revenge. I waited and watched for it. I had the chance to go to the gold diggings; but revenge is sweeter than gold, and still I waited. And one day came into the harbour the looked-for ship. Three of her men deserted her. I took my brother and my cousin, went aboard, and we three were engaged. The ship put off in a hurry before the captain saw me. Ah, his face was pale when he first recognised me in the gale that blew us towards Harbour Island! And ever since he has feared me. He is cowering now in his cabin, fearing that he hears my footprint." And the Kanaka laughed wildly and fiercely. "His fears cannot tell him the half there is in store for him. Revenge is sweet, and I long for the full vengeance I shall take."

Roland shuddered at this wild tirade, and still more at the revengeful glare of Talbot's features. Yet he forced himself to answer in a manner satisfactory to the mutineers.

"You shall have revenge," said the islander. "I promise it to you. The captain shall yet kneel at your feet, and beg of you, and me, too, for mercy. Bah! How I hate him!"

"When shall this be?" asked the youth, with assumed eagerness, yet so disgusted and sick at heart that he feared betraying himself.

"You hear the question?" he asked. "When shall this be? Shall we put it to vote, men?"

"I have no grudge against the captain," said Jones, fixing a reproachful look on Roland.

"Nor I," declared Smith.

"Nor I," echoed a half score of others.

"And, what is more, I shan't join in any mutiny against my countryman, as good a skipper as walks a ship's deck," observed Jones, with decision, "for the sake of any fellow's private grudges."

"Nor I," cried Smith, and a half dozen others.

Talbot's eyes flamed fiercely.

"If not for my sake, then for your own," he said. "Captain Wilcox is dragging you all off up to the North Pacific after whales, when fortunes are lying loose in California, waiting the first comer. You are spiritless, I must say, if you consent to go up there for a year or two, when other whalers desert and make their fortunes. There are lots of vessels lying in Honolulu harbour to-day, without a man to sail her, their crews being all in California, making their piles. How much money will you have at the end of the cruise, that you want to stick to the ship? Oh, you half-hearts! If I had had my way, we should have disposed of the captain and mates, and been sailing towards California at this very minute."

A low murmur came from the assembled crew.

"You know it's so," declared the Kanaka. "You know that you have agreed to put yourselves under my direction, and then you've got afraid and held

back. Ten of you I can depend on as on myself. The rest of you are a wavering lot, ready enough for a mutiny, but mawkish enough to want to save all lives. Ah! What's that noise?"

A faint scuffle on deck attracted his attention.

He listened a minute, and looked out at the door.

A man was at the helm, and another was acting as sentinel.

Satisfied that all was right, he resumed his seat, unconscious that the man at the helm was Mr. Biggs, and the sentinel was the tall, lank, and lean Mr. Hopkins, in the attire of the younger Talbot.

The two mutineers left on deck were bound and gagged, and locked up in a state-room below.

The captain was in the hold, groping hurriedly after the firearms.

"Now," resumed the islander, as he took possession of his seat again, "let's decide the matter. Who is for California and the gold mines?"

There was a full chorus of voices in eager assent.

"Who is for turning his back on certain wealth, and for working like a dog, with nothing to show for it?"

There was a dead silence.

Talbot and Roland felt convinced that they were secretly friends of the captain and would stand by him when the struggle came.

"This is more like being unanimous than any votes we've had," said Talbot, delightedly. "When shall we move? To-night?"

"To-morrow night," suggested several, in whom some natural virtue still lingered, or who desired to put off a scene of carnage.

Remembering the imprisonment of the two mutineers outside, Roland felt that the struggle must occur when they were missed. It would be impossible to put it off till morning. A feeling of desperation came over him.

"Let it be to-night," he exclaimed, with apparent recklessness. "I say to-night."

"There's nothing like hatred to stir the blood, or hurry one on to such deeds. Don't let the lad shame you. Let it be to-night."

The friends of Talbot echoed his cry.

"I tell you what," cried Roland, "you want stirring up with something better than that cheap whisky. It was bought for you sailors, and ain't fit to drink. The captain's got some nice brandy now that is fit for men. I'd like some of that myself. Jones, you go and get some."

Jones replied that he couldn't do it.

"You go, Vanley," suggested Talbot, who had a weakness for brandy.

Vanley declined, alleging as a reason the danger.

"Let Talbot go," said Roland. "He ain't afraid of anything. There's a gallon jug in the pantry. The captain's in his room."

"You go, Roland," said Talbot, his thirst for the brandy increasing. "If you are seen you won't be suspected. Off with you."

Roland hung back, professing great reluctance, and declaring that he was afraid of meeting the skipper. His objections were finally and with great apparent difficulty overruled by Talbot, and he consented to go for the brandy.

"The best French, recollect," said Talbot, eagerly, his mouth watering in anticipation of the treat before him. "That the captain keeps for his own private enjoyment. Don't let him catch you at it. The brandy'll warm our friends up to the pitch we want, eh?"

Thus adjured, Roland hastily quitted his newly-made friends, and set out on his errand.

(To be continued.)

THE Society of Arts has received an important communication from Mr. J. W. Wood, collector of customs at Harwich, upon the loss of life and property at sea and the means of saving both. The scarcity of able seamen for the merchant service was dwelt upon; and suggestions were made for supplying the want by the parish apprenticeship of poor boys, after a twelvemonth in a training-ship, and by providing instruction for adult sailors in port.

Amongst the immediate causes of disasters at sea, Mr. Wood noticed the numerous large masses of wreck allowed to drift about our coasts, the salvage reward being insufficient to pay for the cost and labour of securing those fragments. He also referred to the dangerous practice of carrying cargoes on deck, especially in steam-boats; and he discussed the question of overloading, and the calculation of the proper load-line. For the preservation of life in case of shipwreck, he described a new raft-boat, of his own invention, a model of which he exhibited in the room.

It consists of two rafts, each shaped like the letter A, with a perpendicular through its middle, and a horizontal bar at the base. The bars or beams are composed of solid cork, stiffened with wooden planks; the space between them is filled with a rope-net floor. Each raft has sides 29 ft. in length and a base of 12 ft.; the pair of rafts may be quickly

coupled together by a screw apparatus; and the raft-boat is complete. It was tried at Felixstow, a few years ago, with perfect success, carrying fourteen men; and by means of a line, thrown out from a mortar on shore, the raft-boat was hauled backwards and forwards with ease, landing its men across a strong tide. Such a raft-boat would hold fifty persons, with provisions and casks of water, leaving a sinking ship, and it might either be sailed or rowed. A long and interesting discussion ensued, in which Admiral Sir E. Belcher very strongly commanded the raft-boat devised by Mr. Wood, who has made a free gift to the public of his design. The other subjects mentioned in the essay were also fully discussed by several gentlemen of experience and official authority.

## THE VEILED LADY.

BY THE

Author of "Fairleigh," "The Rival Sisters," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XV.

ON the day designated by the scientific gentleman, he, the youth, and his companion crossed the Channel.

With many peculiar feelings, partaking of joy, wonder, and regret, the youth saw the land of France fade away in the distance, and once more he was upon his favourite element, the sea.

The passage was very pleasant, and when the "white cliffs" of old England came in view, and the three had landed, Frank gazed about him with genuine admiration, while recurring to his mind came the wish he had uttered while imprisoned upon that off-barren island, and in tones low and grateful came the words:

"Oh, England! at last I stand upon thy shore, and thy flag waves above me!"

But he had no time to indulge in his enthusiasm, for a carriage was in waiting, and his two friends were already seated therein, and with a faint sigh he moved forward and joined them.

After resting one night, the party in the morning started by train, and in due time arrived at their destination.

As they alighted at the station, an elegant carriage drawn by two noble grays, dashed up to the door.

The scientific gentleman advanced in his calm, reserved way, and then turning to the youth, said:

"This is my carriage, my young friend; we have yet a long ride. Please enter."

The youth bowed and stepped in, and seated himself upon the velvet cushions of dark blue, where was presently joined by the scientific gentleman while Dombey rode outside with the coachman.

For a few moments they moved on in silence, which was at length broken by Frank, who observed:

"Thus far you have never given me, and I have forbore asking, your name."

His companion smiled and replied:

"It is singular that I should have forgotten it; it is Tweed—Daniel Tweed." He reflected a moment and then continued: "and you had better assume it, as you have no surname."

The youth's eyes drooped, and a red flush mantled his cheek.

Mr. Tweed saw that he had hurt his feelings, and placing his hand upon his shoulder, gently said:

"Forgive me, my boy, I am not sensitive myself, and I forget that others are."

Instantly the red blood receded, the lad's glowing eyes were upraised with gratitude, and a bright smile parted his lips.

Kindness had extinguished the spark which at that instant kindled in the fiery heart; a harsh word would have fanned it into a flame.

During their brief colloquy the town had been left far in the rear, and they were now riding along a smooth country road, upon each side of which were elegant residences shaded in front by majestic trees, beneath which were plats of flowers in bud, for it was yet luxuriant summer, although the air was very warm.

"The scenery is fine here," mused Frank. "I shall like it better than France."

"I hope you will, but you have not beheld the richest portion: we have yet to come to it."

For a short time silence was preserved.

At length the carriage diverged off from the main road, turned to the right into an avenue bounded on either side by box hedges, between the interstices of which the young birds were peeping; while above, as if standing guard over their delicate tendrils, were weeping willows, whose drooping branches, like curtains of verdancy, almost touched the ground.

"You were right," observed the youth, looking round with admiration; "this is indeed lovely."

As he spoke the carriage turned another abrupt

angle of the avenue, and glancing out of the window, Mr. Tweed proudly said:

"See! there is our house; your home, my boy."

Frank eagerly followed his companion's gaze, and beheld a grand mansion, with balconies, colonnades, and porticos, situated upon a gentle elevation, and surrounded by extensive and artistically laid-out grounds, while some rods in the rear at the left were the stable buildings, which, from their fine architecture and construction, might easily have been mistaken for dwellings.

Presently the carriage stopped, and the occupants alighted.

An instant the youth gazed about him, while before his mind seemed rising that desolate island bounded with its huge, dark rocks, and in the distance he again saw the death-bed of the fisherman, and John Moran sitting at the foot; and then, as these thoughts and imaginings were dispelled by the sound of his companion's voice, a brilliant light shot from his eyes, a look of happiness overspread his features, and with many new emotions he walked up the steps, repeating to himself:

"Home—what a charm there is in the word!"

"I am happy to hear you speak thus," said Mr. Tweed, "and may you utter them more long with new fervour."

"I shall, oh, I know I shall like everything here," he ardently responded.

"Golly, isn't dis golly?"

And Domby drove his hands into his pockets, and slowly turning his head, gazed around with eyes and mouth distended, and his dusky features wreathed in one huge smile.

Mr. Tweed smiled at Domby's enthusiasm, and then ascended the steps in company with the youth. As they entered the house, Mr. Tweed remarked:

"You will find your room upon the second floor, left front; when you descend we will take dinner, and then I will show you around."

Smiling his reply the youth ascended the stairs and opened the door of the room indicated. He paused upon the threshold and gazed upon its beauties as one in a dream; then passing in, and closing the door after him, he clasped his hands, and with emotions of happiness, thankfulness and reverence, he raised his eyes towards heaven, and murmured:

"Oh, Father, I thank thee for this, for all thy kindness!"

And then with slow step he traversed the apartment, looking with delighted eyes upon every article that graced the table, and handling almost with awe the select volumes that filled the bookcase. Then remembering that little time intervened before dinner, also the scientific gentleman's strict rule of punctuality, he arranged his toilet with all possible haste, and hurried downstairs.

"Just exact to the time," said Mr. Tweed, "as the youth descended; 'in an instant the bell will ring.'

One silvery peal echoed through the hall ere the last words had left his lips.

With a gratified smile that his prediction had proved thus correct, he led the way to the dining-room, followed by the youth.

The table and everything pertaining to it, was arranged in perfect order, and with scrupulous regard to neatness.

As Frank took his seat, he noticed that a dish containing two eggs, was placed directly in front of his companion's plate.

Mr. Tweed saw the glance, and slowly laying his knife and fork upon the table, raised his eyes, and smiling slightly, remarked:

"You wonder at the idea of my eating eggs at dinner? There is not one person out of twenty that understands the manner in which they should be cooked and eaten; their use is perverted, sir—perverted! Let me tell you that when properly prepared they are the most nutritious food that can be taken into the stomach. Dr. Hunter has said: 'the yolk of eggs, either eaten raw, or slightly cooked, is perhaps the most salutary of all animal substances. It is taken up in the body of the chick, and is the first food presented to it by nature, after its departure from the shell.' Such is the nature of the yolk of an egg, that it is capable of uniting water and oil into a uniform substance, thereby making up for the deficiency of natural bile. It is science, sir, physical science, and if people would know what they eat, and how they eat it, they would live longer, sir."

And with this animated speech upon his favourite theme, Mr. Tweed proceeded to prove his assertions by partaking of the eggs in nearly a raw state.

Presently the meats were brought in.

"Shall I offer you mutton-boiled or beef roasted, my young friend?" queried Mr. Tweed, with that reserved graceful manner so peculiarly his own.

"The latter, if you please."

"Ah, I like that!" responded the scientific gentleman, with an approving bow. "You seem to have a natural conception of the right in regard to many

things. In choosing roast meat you are wise, from the fact, that in that the gelatinous matter is not removed, as it is when meat is boiled: now in roast meat you get gelatin and albumen, consequently it is more nutritious than meat cooked in any other way. I tell you, sir, science is a great thing, but it is not appreciated. Whoever saw a great thing, or a great man that was? Nobody—nobody, sir!"

And with this he proceeded to cater to the youth's tastes.

At the conclusion of the repast, which was prolonged some two hours by the learned gentleman's special reference to his favourite subject, they adjourned to the lawn, and from thence to the gardens, orchards, and other portions of the grounds, and when they returned to the house it was late in the afternoon.

As they entered the parlour, and after the youth had regaled his vision with a glance at its beauties, his companion observed:

"Be seated, my young friend. Now, I wish to speak in regard to Domby. It is certainly not proper for him to indulge in luxurious ease; for he, although very good and trusty, is one of that kind which idleness spoils, literally. Now, what do you propose?"

"I have been reflecting upon the same subject," rejoined the youth, "and I agree with you that he must have something to take up his attention, or his natural propensity for fun will run away with him."

"My opinion exactly. Perhaps the best way which we can dispose of the matter is, that I hire him and give him something to do; that will keep him out of mischief, if nothing else."

"You are very kind, he will appreciate your efforts in his behalf, as much as I do for him; for though ignorant, and uncouth in manner, he is noble-hearted and honest; and allow me to suggest, that whatever duties you give him to perform, impress it upon his mind that they are of consequence and responsibility, and he will be as quiet and serious as you can desire."

"Ah, very good, my young friend. I will act according to your advice, it shows a knowledge of human nature," and with this remark Mr. Tweed arose, begged to be excused, and passed to his library.

In listening to his new friend's instructive conversation the evening passed quickly away, and Frank repaired to his room.

For some time he sat and gazed upon the starlit heavens, while the only sound that broke upon the stillness, was the merry chirp of the cricket and the night bird's plaintive cry.

With feelings of wonder, thankfulness, gladness, and vague conjectures curiously intermingled, he prepared to retire.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

A MONTH had gilded almost imperceptibly away. During this time the scientific gentleman had lavished kindness and money upon the youth as if he were his own son, and at the same time superintended his mental culture with the firmness of a tutor and the gentleness of a parent. Indeed, he had left nothing undone which could tend towards his benefit or advancement. Although an earnest advocate of his own particular study and science, still Mr. Tweed forced none of his ideas upon the youth, or sought to bend his mind in that direction, but had allowed him to follow his own preference, and that was literature.

And Frank? He had become as happy as he could be anywhere under the painful mystery which shrouded his life.

"Twas a bright June afternoon, the air was clear and balmy, and not a cloud marred the firmament above, which shone in all its azure glory, while upon the earth beneath bright nature glowed in thousands of rich and exquisite tints gloriously blended.

Upon the lawn in front of the mansion reclined the youth, on a curiously carved rustic bench. He had been reading, but now his half-open book laid at his side, and his large dark eyes, shining in dreamy thought, were directed upon the blue ether above.

At length he arose, and passed into the house. Upon his way to his room he saw the door of the rear drawing-room open, and as he had never been within its precincts, probably by some oversight of his friend, he paused, peered in a moment, and then entered.

The room was nearly dark, and opening the shutters, which let a flood of golden light into the apartment, he gazed about him. It was furnished in much the same manner as the front drawing-room, the dark blue predominating. Seeing nothing to attract his attention he advanced to close the blinds.

As he reached the window, he suddenly paused, and threw out one hand as if in amazement, while his face paled, and his large dark eyes were riveted upon a painting on the wall.

In a moment he stepped back, darted a hasty glance at the painting, and then in startling tones exclaimed:

"Oh! what is this? That portrait seems to breathe, and sends a thrill to my very heart! Yes, the hair, the features, they are the exact counterpart of my own! Oh, if it could but speak, and tell me that which my heart bleeds to know!"

And sinking into a *fauteuil*, he covered his face with his hands, while his breast rose and fell under the storm of warring emotions within.

"I will gaze once more upon that face," he murmured, dropping his hands.

And slowly arising, he moved towards the spot where he had before stood, and raised his eyes.

As he did so he uttered a cry of painful wonder, quickly recoiled, and for a moment stood utterly amazed. Then as his bewilderment gradually departed, he rubbed his eyes to be sure that he did not dream, once more advanced, and hoarsely ejaculated:

"Is this real, or is it a delusion? A moment since I saw a face the exact counterpart of my own, and now—now 'tis changed, and another is before me—one that seems familiar, yet I know it not!"

And drawing near to the portrait, he gazed upon it with his pale face, while his throbbing brows and fastily-coming breath testified to the intense excitement which pervaded his being.

Presently a new expression broke over his features, and pressing his hands to his brow, he again sank into the chair, and articulated in a quivering voice:

"My senses seem enclosed in a mist. It must be a dreadful illusion, for the second portrait was that of Captain Linwood! Oh! what—what portends these mysteries, and this dark, clouded life?"

And for a short time he remained passive, while around him reigned a stillness which seemed fraught with ominous gatherings, as of winged spirits moving noiselessly through the air, and leaving in their wake a chilling influence.

And as he again became comparatively composed, he arose and moved towards the picture—that awe-inspiring picture which seemed endowed with the power of life. He raised his eyes—they dilated, his form quivered, his breath came in gasps, and his tones husky and hollow came the words:

"That doubly-detested face—in all its hideousness—the face of John Moran!"

And faint from his terrible agitation, he sank upon the floor, and for some time remained motionless.

A quarter of an hour might have passed, when he raised his face, pallid and careworn as by time.

Slowly regaining his feet he tremulously advanced to the portrait, and turned his glittering eyes upon it.

Again the scene had changed—a ship struggling amid the wild fury of a tempest met his view.

He stood as if rooted to the spot, every fibre of his being rigid, and his dark eyes motionless, as if set in marble, while from his lips in sad and subdued tones, issued the words:

"Yes, dread fate, I see it! I see you, rolling ocean, whose angry waves toss and foam in their might, while above hangs the dreary, gloomy clouds, through which no ray of light appears, but in their hidden depths lie volumes of volcanic thunder, ready to burst at any instant, and rend the heavens with their dreadful war! I feel it, I see it, an ice-like thrust to my very heart, for it is symbolic of my life—dark—dark for ever!"

And as he uttered the last words, his muscles relaxed, his form tottered, and wilily throwing out one arm as if to save himself, he dropped insensible to the floor.

A few moments passed, when a step echoed over the hall, and Mr. Tweed paused and looked in.

As he saw the inanimate form of his young friend, a look of fear swept over his features, and moving quickly into the room, he lifted the youth in his arms, tenderly placed him upon a sofa, and hurriedly rang the bell.

Instantly a servant appeared.

"Bring me cologne and water—quick!" hastily ordered Mr. Tweed.

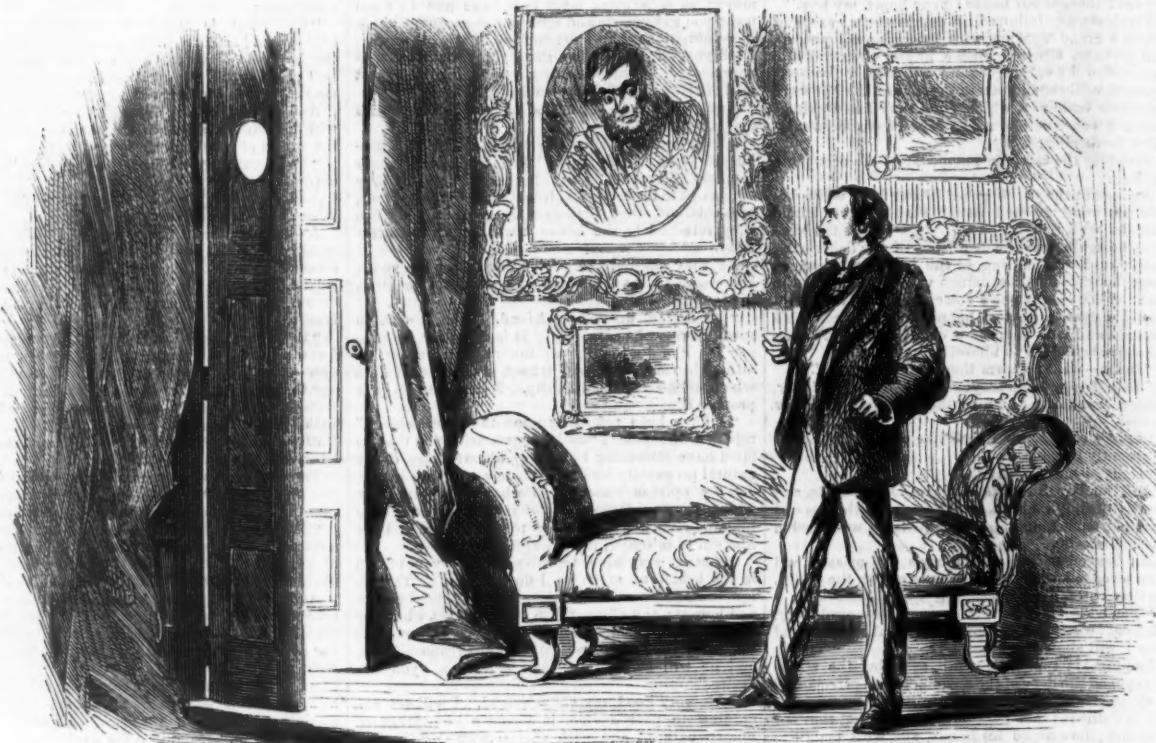
In a moment the desired articles were at hand, and saturating his handkerchief with cologne, he bathed the youth's brow, and chafed his wrists.

In a short time Frank opened his eyes. As he saw the kind face of his friend he started, and then pressed his hands to his temples, as if to drive the mist from his brain.

"Are you better now—how do you feel—what caused your asphyxia?" anxiously queried Mr. Tweed.

"Oh, I have seen the picture of my life, black as night as it is, and dreary as a desert," and a sigh, long drawn and painful, accompanied the words.

"Why do you speak thus?" continued his companion, with increasing earnestness.



## [THE MYSTERIOUS PICTURE.]

"Oh, because it is truth, and a truth that sears my mind as with fire—look there—the picture will prove my words—look!" and he turned his face towards the wall.

"You are ill, my boy," said Mr. Tweed, soothingly, "you have studied too hard, you must have rest."

"No, no, not that!" the youth almost fiercely exclaimed; "I am not ill—I have seen all I say, and more too!"

"But where, Frank, where?" queried his friend, perplexedly.

"The portrait that hangs near the window! It has changed time after time, with changes that cause my mind to tremble, and my heart to sink!"

Mr. Tweed glanced in the direction indicated, and in tones of surprise answered:

"Why, that is a portrait of myself."

"Your portrait?" frantically cried the youth.

"Let me see—let me see if again it has changed."

And arising, he darted forward. He glanced upward, he saw his friend's face where he had seen the others. An instant he stood gazing upon it with a look of vacancy, tinged with doubt, almost insane, and then starting back, with frenzied air, ejaculated:

"Oh, am I mad—have my eyes turned traitors—has my mind deserted me? Oh, great Heaven! what means this—this harrowing torture of heart and brain?"

And again faint and exhausted, he sank into his friend's arms, who laid his head upon his breast, and sought to mitigate his suffering and allay his feverish perturbation.

"Let me go to my room," murmured the youth, weakly.

"Yes, and I will go with you."

And with these words, Mr. Tweed placed his arm around him and assisted him to his room, where he remained an hour nursing him with the wisdom of a physician and the gentleness of a woman.

At the expiration of the hour the youth was sleeping. Bending over him, with a look of affection and solicitude intermingled, Mr. Tweed mused:

"He breathes regular, his pulse is right, his brow is a little too warm, but nothing to harm; my sedative has proved efficacious. I think I can leave him now with perfect safety;" and casting one more glance upon the slumbering youth, the scientific gentleman moved softly from the room.

The youth slept until the evening, and then awoke much refreshed. Feeling the desire for food, he arose, robed himself, and descended.

At the foot of the stairs he met Mr. Tweed, who, as he saw him, in astonishment said:

"I was about to look in upon you; how do you feel? Are you not overtaxing your strength in leaving your room so soon?"

"Oh, no, I am quite well now, thank you; my principal wish is for some refreshment!"

"Ah, that is a good symptom. Let us return to the dining-room."

And with these words Mr. Tweed turned, and accompanied by Frank, proceeded to the dining-room.

After partaking of a cup of tea, a bit of tender loin steak, and some excellent toast, the youth declared his hunger appeased, and adjourned to the drawing-room.

At nine o'clock he arose, excused himself upon the plea of headache, and announced his intention of retiring.

"Shall I not summon Dombey, and have him sleep upon the lounge in your room?" asked Mr. Tweed.

"No, I thank you; it is needless," he answered, and bidding his friend good-night, left the room.

Entering his apartment he locked the door, and wishing a few moments' reflection, threw himself upon the bed without undressing. At last weariness overcame him, and aided by the cool air from the open window, soon lulled him into a gentle slumber.

The hours flew on, and still he slept.

Outside the night was dark; no silvery-faced moon illuminated the broad dome of heaven, or cast its welcome beams on the verdant earth. All was black and grim, and the sky was only relieved from the prevailing hue by a few stars, which, like drops of pure dew, shone upon the Stygian mantle which enveloped heaven and earth.

Suddenly a stealthy footfall upon the balcony in front of the mansion broke the stillness of the night, then an interval of portentous quiet—anon, another, still softer and more careful than the first, and presently a shadowy form crept in at the window, and crouching near the floor, glided like a hungry tiger towards the bed where rested the slumbering youth.

As the man neared the couch he started quickly up, hastily placed a cloth saturated with a powerful narcotic to the nostrils of the youth, raised him in his arms, and moved noiselessly to the window.

Having reached the balcony without a murmur or sound, the man imitated the chirp of a cricket. An instant passed, and the sound was repeated from below. Advancing with the greatest caution towards a portion of the balcony where a rope ladder had been secured, the man carefully descended, still bearing in his arms the unconscious form of the youth.

Having gained the ground in safety, he was joined by a second, and the two rapidly and silently pursued their way down the avenue. Presently the rumble of fastly-receding wheels rose upon the air, and echoed dimly through the trees.

The sun rose, morning came, and nature once again bloomed fresh and lovely.

An hour Mr. Tweed had been sitting at the breakfast table awaiting the appearance of his young protégé. At last he became anxious, and sent Dombey to his room to ascertain the cause of his detention.

Hurriedly the negro ascended the stairs, and knocking loudly upon the door, shouted:

"Cum, Massa Frank, Massa Tweed am waitin' for you!"

No answer.

"Golly, how dat ar boy will sleep! He snooze jess like um cotton-bale: but I'll shoot um dit time."

And Dombey struck the panel several vigorous blows, which, had it not been oak, would have split from side to side.

Anxiously he waited, and then, as no reply came, a vague fear arose within his breast, and with undivided resolve, he threw himself against the door.

Under the force of the powerful blow the lock gave way, the door flew open, and Dombey was precipitated headlong into the room. Hastily arising, he glanced towards the bed—"twas empty!

A moment he stood silent, his eyes distended with amazement, and his body quivering; then, as the terrible realisation sent a chilling pang to his heart, he threw himself upon the bed, and shrieked:

"Oh, my deely belubbed boy—he's gwine! Oh, whar am my young massa—my dear massa—my buty boy? O-h—O—O!"

And the faithful Dombey wrung his hands, and the great tears trickled down his cheeks.

At that instant a quick step sounded near, and Mr. Tweed rushed into the room, exclaiming:

"What is this—why are you so affected—speak?"

"Oh, he's gwine—dey's stol 'im 'way, an' poor ole Domb wants to die, he dus—oh!"

As Dombey ceased, Mr. Tweed's eye fell upon the vacant bed—a deadly pallor overspread his features, and straining his hands together, he cried in dismay:

"Gone? Oh, Heaven!"

"Yus, he's gwine—I'se all lone. I'se ben wid him ebbery whar, I'se wud died fur him, an' now dey's stol 'im 'way, an' I'se all lone!"

And Dombey's giant form shook with heartrending sorrow.

(To be continued.)



## STONIO.

## CHAPTER X.

The astronomer entered with the grave slowness which in general characterised his movements, closing the door as he did so, and advanced to the table near which Lady Hilda sat.

His mind seemed filled with memories as grave as his aspect, for without more than glancing at the lady, he sat down, and leaning his head upon his hands, remained silent for several moments, a silence which Lady Hilda at length broke.

"Senor Demetrios, may I ask your attention?"

"Pardon, Lady Hilda," he replied, turning his face towards her; and to her amazement she saw that his cheeks were moist with tears. "I was thinking of the past."

"And of the future."

"You mean of the present, lady. Youth ever thinks only of the present. Age thinks only of the past—the wise only of the future. I have been of the wise—careless of the present, regardless of the past, mindful only of the future. I am no longer wise, for I have been committing the greatest of follies—weeping over the past."

There was so much depth of sadness in his voice that Lady Hilda was awed for a moment; but regaining her courage, and fearing the speedy interruption of the interview by the unexpected coming of the escort she had desired, she said:

"Is it true that you are a magician, senor?"

"No, not as the vulgar believe, lady; and by the vulgar I mean the ignorant nobles of Lisbon as well as the unlearned common people. Yet I know this, lady, you are in danger of creating love where misery only may result."

Lady Hilda started and blushed deeply; but assuming a composure she did not feel, she replied, haughtily:

"I do not understand you, Senor Distro."

"I should have said, lady, that you have already created love which may result only in misery."

"I am still in the dark, Senor Distro."

"Ah, lady, there is an old sarcastic and very true proverb which says, 'There are none so blind as those who will not see.' You have already created a devouring and hopeless passion in the heart of the man who has twice saved your life. Do not feign surprise, lady, for you know it is so."

"You refer to the stone-cutter. Has he dared tell you that he loves me?"

"You would despise him, lady, did you believe

## [THE ASTRONOMER'S PRAYER.]

he could be so aspiring? No, he has not told me. He has not said so to you, but his eyes declared it, and I was sorry to see that so high-born a lady could stoop to trifle with the heart of an ingenuous young man, unfortunately her inferior in rank."

"Could I prevent his admiring me, senor?"

"No," replied the astronomer, with a graceful gesture. "All must admire, you, Lady Hilda, but you plainly encouraged his admiration, and expanded it into love. I am an old man, Lady Hilda, and may speak freely to the young. I know not why I am so drawn towards this young man, a total stranger to me, unless it is because he so resembles a noble gentleman whom I once loved more than I love life now, more than I loved life then. But I feel my heart leaping towards this unknown but noble-minded artisan, and I do not wish to have his heart crushed as mine was years ago. I have not been long in Lisbon, and yet I have heard that Lady Hilda Montredores, Countess of Valveda, is the affianced of Prince Enrique, Duke del Sorno. Is it true?"

"It is true, senor. What then?"

"And the marriage is to be celebrated on the 10th of November of this year?"

"Court gossip has told you this, Senor Distro."

"No matter how the report reached me, lady. Is it true?"

"Suppose it to be so."

"The day is not far off, Lady Hilda. Yet you have begun what you ladies of the court call an intrigue."

"An intrigue, senor!"

"It merits no wortier a name, Lady Hilda. Does Prince Enrique love you?"

"Not as I wish to be loved," replied Lady Hilda, who felt all her pride of rank beaten down to humility by the calm power of the astronomer's steady gaze.

"And would you have him love you as you wish to be loved?"

"Plainly, no; for I do not love him. Senor Distro, I heard you were a magician, and I have longed to visit you, to ask if my appointed marriage with Prince Enrique would result happily. I welcomed the chance that gave me a private interview with you, with no risk of exciting gossip."

"You do not ask if your marriage with him will be happy?"

"No; for why ask of what I know? I know I shall be miserable as his wife," replied Lady Hilda.

"Why did you consent to become his wife?"

"The match was made by the king. I had nothing to do with it."

"Ah!" said the astronomer. "Then it is unworthy of the name of marriage. It is to be merely an alliance."

"True, and I wished to avoid it. But I am powerless, senor. Count Pedro is my kinsman and guardian, and he controls my wishes. Prince Enrique wishes to wed me because I am wealthy. Perhaps he loves me as much as one of his nature can love. I do not know. He is so cold and haughty, and then he is said to be very vicious. I fear him, senor. Whether he loves me or not, I fear that when he shall be my husband he will be a jealous, cruel tyrant, as merciless as he will be unfaithful; and unfaithful he will be, if all the tales of the court are true."

"A man, in short, who, if he detected one of those glances you bestowed upon this humble stone-cutter, would certainly compass his death speedily?"

"Yes, senor."

"And yet you, in return for the noble kindness of Stonio, who twice has saved your life, have kindled in the young artisan's soul a flame of love which will fire him to boldness that must be, sooner or later, detected by the vengeful Prince Enrique. Ah, Lady Hilda, they all call you 'the friend of the poor!' Why did you not turn the chilling face of scorn upon Stonio when he dared raise his eyes to yours to admire? He is a stone-cutter—a mere man of the people—one of a class you nobles despise; but he is proud and sensitive—a glance of scorn or of contempt from you would have crushed his admiration instantly. It was cruel, it was ungenerous, Lady Hilda, for you to inspire hopeless desires in the soul of the brave young man who twice perilled his life and saved yours."

"I could not help it, senor! I could not help it!" exclaimed Lady Hilda, pale and weeping.

"Ah, can it be that that which I saw was not the coquetry your sex delights in?"

"Senor, as I live, though I have spoken with Stonio but three times, and though but few hours have passed since I first saw him, it is to my heart as if I had known him for years," replied Lady Hilda. "Ah, I know not why I am so forgetful of maiden modesty as to tell you this—you who are more a stranger personally to me than Stonio; but before I ever saw him—and I had never heard of him before I saw him—I had heard of you, Senor Distro, and of your great wisdom; and I had resolved to seek in you that which I dared not seek in the royal court—a friend and an adviser. I should have told you how repulsive to me is this intended marriage, for your noble and benevolent face would have instantly as-

sured me you could never betray the confession of an unhappy maiden, whose guardian and king had commanded her to wed a prince whose character is that of a demon, for all he hides it under a cold and haughty exterior. I would have asked you to use those strange powers report says you have, to rescue me from this detested marriage—yes, I would have asked you boldly, for my heart was becoming more and more desperate to escape a fate I knew would be most miserable. You would have aided me, would you not?" she asked, imploringly, and placing both of her beautiful hands upon one of his, her tearful eyes gazing eagerly into his grave but benevolent face. "Oh, you would have aided me, would you not, Señor Distro?"

"I would have advised you, lady," he said. "Yes, and I would perhaps have aided you, though I have long ceased to meddle with the affairs of men. Plainly, lady, I am no magician; simply I am a man solely devoted to science, to the study of the great mysteries of creation. Time was when my heart was like that of other men—full of human passions, human desires, human sympathies. But my heart was burnt out, as it were, when my brother was burnt alive in the Ruccio, years, weary, bitter years ago. Yet the incidents of this night have told me that though to be worthy of heaven, a man must cease to hate, he must continue to love his fellow man. Yes, perhaps I would have aided you—perhaps I would have refused to meddle with the intrigues and plots of a royal court."

"But you will aid me now, Señor Distro?" urged Lady Hilda. "I have told you how I detest the man they wish to make my husband! I have told you how I could not conceal the sudden and powerful feelings I have conceived for this young man. I suppose it is love, for never have I been so affected before. I know that if the appointed marriage was a detestation before I saw Stonio, it is a horror to me now."

"And now you wish more than the avoidance of marriage with the prince," remarked the astronomer, with great gravity. "You wish marriage with the stone-cutter?"

"I said not the last, Señor Distro," replied Lady Hilda, quickly, while her beautiful face became suffused with blushes.

"Ah, because he is a stone-cutter and you a countess!"

"No, I never thought of that, señor."

"It is necessary that you shall think of it, lady, and seriously. You may, by my aid, if you follow my advice, avoid marriage with Prince Enrique, but to wed so far beneath you is something I dare not advise you to do. Not because Stonio is a stone-cutter, do I consider him unworthy of wedlock any lady in Portugal, but there exist social distinctions which cannot be disregarded."

"Oh, señor!" interrupted Lady Hilda. "Let us not speak of what may never be—that is, I mean it is not of marriage with Stonio I am thinking, but of avoiding marriage with Prince Enrique."

"Very well, let that be the subject for the present. I will be your friend, lady. My only advice at this time is, delay the marriage. You may be able to do that, at least."

"The day is appointed, the arrangements made. The king will not change the day," replied Lady Hilda, sadly.

"You have asked him already?"

"Twice, and on the second asking he turned a severe countenance upon me, and said, 'Dare not again attempt to change the mind of a king!' So I know I have no hope there. The day is fixed immovably—the 10th of November—and the ceremony is to be celebrated in the great church of the Dominicans in the presence of King José and the royal court. Count Pedro is impatient also."

"And why is he impatient?" asked the astronomer. "One would imagine that he should be reluctant to resign to another the presence and care of so fair a ward, whom he must love as a daughter, especially as in doing so he must cease to have control of vast estates—the lucrative estates of Montredores."

"Señor, Count Pedro, though he is my kinsman, is intensely selfish, and cares nothing for me," said Lady Hilda, scornfully. "The fact that sees me the wife of Prince Enrique will enable Count Pedro to call himself owner of one half of the Montredores estates in Portugal, and all of the same estates in the colonies. Of the other half, all becomes the property of Prince Enrique. It is a compact."

"A compact! It is a vile bargain, and Count Pedro may gladly relinquish his percentage as manager and guardian of the estates to become master of half of them—vineyards, farms, villas, mansions in city and country, ships, lands, and mines! He is already immensely rich in being possessor of the great Villota estates which reverted to him by the

confiscation of the immense inheritance of the Duke of Villota, and the duke's brother, the Conde de Espinoza."

For the first time during the interview Lady Hilda noticed that the astronomer's eyes flashed angrily, and his broad, lofty forehead grew dark and threatening.

"The marriage shall not take place, Lady Hilda, if I can prevent it."

"The king?" she said, inquiringly.

"There is a greater power than that of kings," replied the astronomer, calmly. "The 10th, did you say?"

"The 10th of November."

"And as it is now past midnight, this is the—of October. It is now nearly two in the morning," he said, after a glance at the clock on a stand near him. "It is my hour for study of the heavens. Pray excuse me while I go to the platform above. I shall be away but a few minutes."

Lady Hilda bowed, and the astronomer ascended the ladder with an ease and speed that told much of the vigour and elasticity of his frame.

He was not upon the platform more than a quarter of an hour before he descended, coming down slowly and silently.

As he reached the floor Lady Hilda was amazed to see him sink upon his knees, raise his clasped hands, and lift his eyes toward heaven, his lips moving in prayer—a prayer inaudible to her, except in one startling sentence. The sentence was this, spoken just before he arose from his knees:

"And, oh, Ruler of heaven and of earth, and Decree of earthquakes, have mercy upon the souls of those who shall perish on that fearful day when thy wrath shall fall upon this city as it fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah!"

Perhaps he did not intend that any mortal ear should hear even so much of his earnest petition—perhaps he did not know, in his earnestness, that he had uttered any part of it aloud—for he arose with a deep gloom upon his majestic countenance, and began to pace the observatory as if wholly ignorant of the presence of Lady Hilda.

She was awed by his manner, as well as by the remarkable words she had heard, and dared not intrude upon the silence he seemed to desire.

But a tapping at the door caused him to halt; and then he advanced very near to Lady Hilda, and whispered:

"If the marriage does not take place before the 10th of November, you will never be the wife of Prince Enrique. Before that day he and Lisbon, and perhaps the whole of Portugal, will have been destroyed!"

Having whispered this, he advanced to the door.

"Alas!" thought Lady Hilda, "this man is after all a mere charlatan, or a madman! I am indeed foolish to desire or expect aid from him."

But the astronomer now opened the door, and there entered man of tall and powerful, and yet strikingly symmetrical frame, clad in a garb of black velvet, exactly of the fashion worn by the astronomer. There was this difference, however: the garb of the astronomer, who was slender, sat loosely upon him, while that of the new-comer was well filled by the swelling muscles and limbs it clothed.

Like the astronomer he wore a short mantle of black velvet, white, unlike the astronomer, he wore large gauntlets of dark leather.

"My secretary, Lady Hilda," said the astronomer, as this person entered the room; and Lady Hilda raised her eyes to the face of the stranger.

"Good Heaven!" thought Lady Hilda, as the secretary's eyes for an instant met hers. "How much his eyes and forehead resemble those of Stonio. And how noble a presence!"

The secretary was shaved very close, and his mouth, chin, and cheeks smooth and beardless, were totally unlike those of Stonio, whose forehead, eyes, and contour of nose and temple he certainly had, in the resemblance most marvellous: that is, the lower part of his face was wholly unlike that of the stone-cutter, so far as Lady Hilda could say, as the latter had never been seen by her, nor by anyone in Lisbon, without the glossy, massive, and jet-black beard and moustache, which gave such an air of dignity and maturity to his countenance.

But these features of the secretary's, the lips, the shape and expression of the mouth, the chin, and the faultless contour of the firmly-set jaws, were strikingly handsome, as was his figure, in which great strength seemed united with polished grace.

"My secretary, Lady Hilda—Señor Miguel," were the words of the astronomer, and fixing his eyes steadily upon the face of the latter.

Had Lady Hilda not been fascinated at the moment by the remarkable resemblance of the upper part of the secretary's face to the same features of Stonio, she would have noticed that there was a strange eagerness in the gaze of the astronomer as he fixed

his usually calm and steady eyes upon the face of Señor Miguel.

Had Señor Miguel not so strongly resembled Stonio in those features which had become so engraved upon the heart of Lady Hilda, she would scarcely have glanced up at him when the astronomer introduced him—for what was the secretary of Señor Distro to her? The resemblance between the astronomer and the stone-cutter who had disturbed Don Alva, had not escaped the observation of Lady Hilda, and yet that which had passed in her presence was indisputable proof that Stonio and Distro Demetrios were utter strangers to each other. Still, this strange resemblance remained in her mind, and the mystery was increased when, on glancing from the upper part of the face of the secretary to that of the astronomer, she saw that an marked resemblance existed between them as between the secretary and the stone-cutter, or that between the stone-cutter and the astronomer.

The secretary bowed with a natural kind of grace and ease, far different from the affected fashion of the courtiers whose salutations Lady Hilda had daily encountered at court. He did not speak, however, but obeying a gesture made by the astronomer, moved towards the ladder which led to the platform.

But he had not reached it when there was heard a heavy, rapid trampling upon the flat roof of the house, and in an instant after a trooper in the uniform of the king's body-guard appeared at the open window, and sprang in from the roof, just as Stonio had done, and followed in the same manner by three others, all armed to the teeth and grasping naked sabres.

The secretary, instead of ascending the ladder, at once faced these intruders, and folding his arms across his breast, glanced quickly at them as if measuring their strength with his dark and flashing eyes.

#### CHAPTER XI.

THE four intruders, whose dress told that they were all members of the body-guard of King José, having leaped into the observatory, stood for a moment irresolute, awed by the stately and majestic presence of the white-haired, white-bearded astronomer, who confronted them with the steady eye and commanding air of one used to scorn surprises.

They thought him some grand hidalgo, so noble was his aspect, so rich and imposing his dress, and so costly all the furniture of the apartment.

They had also recognised Lady Hilda, whose wealth and beauty had attracted all eyes of Lisbon to her when she appeared in the royal court or in the streets.

There was much that smacked of station and rank too, in the air and attitude of the secretary, so that he of the intruders who had first leaped in at the window, took off the plumed hat, and bowing first to Lady Hilda and then to Señor Distro, and then to Señor Miguel, said:

"Pardon, hidalgo. We are in search of a furious rioter, whom we have traced to this room."

"And who are you?" demanded Señor Distro, with calm haughtiness.

"Pardon, hidalgo; I am Joann Britto, a captain in the palace troops, one of the officers of the royal body-guard."

"And who is the rioter you seek?"

"A stone-cutter, by name known only as Stonio, one of the leaders of the riot we have put down. A fellow who has slain two, if not more, of the royal musketeers, one of them no less a person than Captain Alvarez, who was my cousin. There are special orders out for his arrest, dead or alive. Oh, I hope we may capture him alive," continued the officer. "We wish to make a terrible example of him. But if we find him dead," he added with a shrug of his shoulders, "we are to behead and quarter his body, as a mark of infamy."

"Perhaps the man who was here not long ago was the man you seek—?"

"Oh, we have traced him to this room," interrupted the officer. "He was pursued into the adjoining house, and followed by Alto Riez, a trooper of the palace guards. The body of Alto Riez lies out there in the street, where it was tossed by this fellow Stonio, undoubtedly, for the other rioters who were pursued into the house fled through it, and so on into the next street, where they were cut to pieces soon after. But Stonio fled to the roof, pursued by Alto Riez. A good citizen, one Silva, a confectioner, who had been badly used by the rioters at its commencement, having sought refuge in the house of an acquaintance, who lives just on the opposite side of the street, armed himself with a carbine, and for hours fired at the rioters from the roof, as they scammed through the streets. He witnessed a fight with sabres on the roof of the adjoining house, between Riez and Stonio; saw the latter cut down the

former, and hurl him over the eaves into the street below, and fired at him as he sprang into this room. As soon as Senor Silva dare venture into the streets, he made his way to the palace to try to win the reward."

"What reward?"

"Ten thousand reals for the body of Stonio the stone-cutter, to anyone who shall first give information that shall lead to his discovery, dead or alive. Senor Silva was of the belief that the man he saw kill Alto Riez was Stonio—in short, he was sure of it."

"A man in the garb of a workman, wounded and bleeding and stained with blood, has been in this room," said the astronomer; "and he entered it by leaping through that window. You may see blood-stains from his dress or person on the curtains, the wall, and the carpet."

"True," remarked the officer, as he glanced about him, "and on the sofa too. He must have reclined or fallen there. Ah, undoubtedly he received medical care here, señor. May I have the honour to hear your name and title?" he asked, suddenly, and with a grave bow.

"Title? I have none," replied the astronomer.

"Oh! Ah, you are not then of the nobility?" said the officer, with far less humility than he had hitherto used—in fact with arrogance, tempered into bare respect by the presence of Lady Hilda and the stately-looking secretary.

"I am a man, sir officer."

"Oh, a man! So is the villain we seek. But probably this gentleman is the chief personage here, and a noble."

The secretary simply shook his head in reply, as the officer bowed to him.

"Ah," said the latter, who laid some claims to nobility of birth, and who was a mere satellite of the great, "I must address myself to you, Lady Hilda, as the only person of rank present, for as these are not nobles, they are probably friends of the rioters. Here are phials and flagons, evidently lately used, and here is a blood-stained needle, such as a surgeon would use in sewing together a wound," continued the keen-eyed officer, glancing around. "Oh, it is very plain that Master Stonio found friends in this room."

"Why do you not search the house for him?" demanded the astronomer, calmly. "There is a ladder which leads to the platform on the roof of this observatory; you may find him up there, Captain Britto."

"Go up, Paulo," said the officer to one of his men. "It is not probable that he is there. He is too cunning to be caught in such a place."

"If he is up there," growled the soldier, in no pleasant tone, "he will make short work of me, and of all of us, if we assail him in such a point of advantage."

And with these words he began reluctantly to mount the ladder, the secretary stepping aside with a grave smile at the evident terror depicted upon the fellow's grim visage.

"He is not there, captain," remarked Lady Hilda.

"Then if Lady Hilda says that," cried the soldier, coming down with alacrity, "there is no need for me to go up."

"Ah, Lady Hilda," said Britto, "you vouch for his not being there, and that is sufficient. We are here to cut off his retreat, if he is still in the house. The greater part of my company is below, and holding every avenue of escape. I fear, however, he has already escaped, as a long time has passed since Senor Silva saw him enter here. But whether he be captured or not," he added, in a severe voice and addressing the astronomer, "I must arrest you, sir, and you also, sir, for it is plain that you have given assistance to the rioter."

"Neither of these gentlemen was present when the man you seek sprang into this room," said the Lady Hilda, with great haughtiness; "I alone was here. I recognised in the man a person who had twice saved my life—once from the violence of the liberated galley slaves—and I did what I could to recruit his strength. More than an hour ago he left this room. To check court scandal, Captain Britto, I tell you that I, with Count Pedro and Prince Enrique, were forced to take refuge in this house, and I am deeply grateful to this gentleman for the kindness he has shown me. If you arrest him you must arrest me."

"Oh, how can you imagine such an act possible on my part!" exclaimed the fawning officer; "your words alter the case."

"Captain, captain!" here shouted one of the men, who had been staring at the face of the astronomer and scratching his own head by turns, as if in great perplexity. "do you know where we are? Saints preserve us! we are in the presence of Demetrius, the—the wizard of Rome!"

"The deuce!" cried the captain and the other two in chorus, recoiling towards the open window and

holding the points of their swords towards the astronomer, their faces pale and their hands trembling. Lady Hilda smiled, the astronomer held an unchanged countenance, and the secretary flashed a glance of amazement at the man whom the terrified soldiers had called "the wizard of Rome."

This glance of amazement on the part of the secretary was observed only by Lady Hilda, who had turned towards him as she smiled at the superstitious terror of the guards.

The truth flashed through her mind instantly; there was something suddenly revealed by the startled expression of the secretary's features which caused her to recognise him. A violent trembling seized upon her frame, she became deathly pale, and staring at him she exclaimed—not aloud, but in her heart:

"Oh, Heaven! It is Stonio himself!"

"Lady Hilda!" said the deep voice of the calm-faced astronomer, whose quick glance instantly detected her recognition of the pretended secretary.

Recalled to herself and the imminent peril of the disguised stone-cutter, Lady Hilda cast her eyes upon the floor, now being in great fear lest Stonio might be also recognised by the guards.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

The noise made by these of Captain Britto's company who were eagerly searching the lower part of the house now reached the ears of all in the observatory, a fact that encouraged the affrighted guards, who were evidently about to spring from the window, and fly pell-mell from the presence of one whom You said dealt with demons.

"You are sure he is the Wizard of Rome?" asked the captain. "Stand firm, men! We are four good and true Christians, and I hear our comrades below. You are sure, Paulo?"

"I swear it," replied the soldier, crossing himself. "I saw him in Rome last year. It is Demetrius the Greek."

The fame of the man who was known in Rome and Lisbon as "The Wizard" had reached Lisbon, as it had many other cities of Southern Europe, in exaggerated form, and startling stories of his supernatural powers had been told.

The superstitious minds of the Portuguese, ever ready to believe in the supernatural—a disposition indeed greatly encouraged by their clergy—swallowed confidently all the marvellous tales reported of the celebrated wizard of Rome, who had succeeded in obtaining from the Pope himself protection from the civil and religious powers of that city.

In truth the Pope was a man of clear sense and great sagacity, and knowing that Dietro Demetrius was simply a philosopher, an astronomer, a scholar of profound learning, and a man far in advance of his age, had willingly granted him papal authority to pursue his studies in Rome, and in all the Papal dominions, free from molestation.

But fame had given Dietro Demetrius the name and unholly powers of a wizard, a magician, and a sorcerer; and at the mere mention of the fact that they were in the presence of "the wizard of Rome," the four guardians were ready to sink with terror.

The following were some of the many words common report said Dietro Demetrius had done:

"He could make the sun take pictures:

"He could hold a sponge or a wet cloth to a man's nostrils, and cut off both of that man's legs, and the man feel no pain:

"He could give a man gas to breathe, and pull out every tooth the man had without the patient knowing pain:

"He could construct a boat of wood, or even wholly of iron, put fire and water in it, and it would glide about as if alive:

"He could play with the lightning itself, and make it transmit messages on coils of wire:

"He could take a dead man, and, by a machine which he applied, make the corpse stare, strike out, grimace, and act for a time as if alive:

"He had taken the body of a malefactor from the gallows, when the man had been hanging nearly an hour, and restored him to life by shocks of lightning which he held imprisoned in a box of wood and metal:

"He could put in motion heavy machinery with hot water:

"He could do the same without water, using only hot air:

"He could do the same without fire or water or air, using only the heat of the sun:

"He had discovered great secrets, dangerous secrets of heaven and earth:

"He had invented a kind of powder, to which good old-fashioned gunpowder was a mere puff of smoke—and gunpowder, as everybody knew then, was the invention of the devil and Friar Bacon."

And it was very true that Dietro Demetrius could do, and had done all these wonders—wonders then,

though familiar now—for this profound man of science had anticipated many of the discoveries and inventions of later times, such as chloroform, nitrous oxide gas, the various uses of steam and electricity, the photograph, the caloric engine, the electric telegraph, the galvanic battery, and many others.

But fame also attributed to him all the supposed powers of magic, coupling his name and knowledge with the spirits of earth, fire, and air. Everything was said of him, except that he could take portraits of the spirits of the dead, for even the superstition of the foolish of that day had not reached that height of absurdity and besotted fanaticism—an absurdity of folly recently developed in the brains of the so-called Spiritualists of 1869.

It was not at all wonderful, therefore, that Captain Britto and his comrades trembled in the presence of this supposed magician, who calmly said:

"I am Dietro Demetrius, called the Wizard of Rome. I am no wizard, but simply a student of science."

"But why are you in Lisbon?" demanded Captain Britto.

"You have no right to question my movements," replied the astronomer with a sudden haughtiness and consciousness of superiority that made the officer quail again.

But at this moment the face of another man appeared at the open window, as he stood n-tip-toe on the roof and peered in.

"Ah," thought Stonio, as he glanced at this face—a broad, fat, and cunning face, full of pugnacity and treachery—"her" is Silva, the confectioner. I saved his life, and yet for the offered reward he has put the guards on my track. Will he recognise me in this garb, and my beard shorn off?"

Senor Silva did not recognise him. He had not studied the features of the stone-cutter as Lady Hilda had; and even had he done so, the impression caused by those features would not have remained upon his mind as it had upon the admiring heart of the noble lady.

He stared at the disguised secretary no more than he stared at Lady Hilda and the astronomer, but especially upon the face of the latter did he rivet his eyes in a stare of mingled wonder and terror.

"He does not recognise me," thought the stone-cutter, drawing a long breath of relief.

"He wonders at my presence here," thought Lady Hilda, to whom the person of Silva was well known.

"Can it be possible that this wretch with the head of a bulldog and the heart of a fox, recognises me?" thought the astronomer, though his majestic face revealed no trace of any emotion.

"Ha!" said Silva, catching the eye of one of the guards, "who is that? I mean the white-bearded gentleman."

"Demetrius, the Wizard of Rome; the evil one in the form of man, more likely!"

But Silva uttered a cry of terror and vanished.

Looking out of the window after him, the soldier saw him running at dangerous speed over the roof, as if eager only to put as great a distance as possible as speedily as he could between himself and the observatory of Senor Dietro.

Persons were heard ascending the stairs which led from the room below to the small vestibule of the observatory, and as the soldier turned from looking after the fugitive confectioner, and wishing indeed that he himself dared imitate his precipitate retreat without orders from his captain, there was a violent rapping at the door, immediately following an ineffectual effort to open it by those who demanded admittance.

The astronomer, who alone knew the secret of opening the door, turned calmly and opened it wide.

Half-a-score of guards poured in eagerly, but seemed vexed at not finding the one they sought.

"Well?" said Britto to his second in command, who saluted as he recognised his captain.

"No luck, captain. The fellow is not in this house—unless," he added, after another glance around the room, "he may be up there. I see a ladder leading above—"

"He is not there," interrupted the astronomer, who did not wish the soldiers to ascend, lest they might disarrange some valuable instruments.

"He was here," said Lady Hilda, coldly. "He went out of this room more than an hour ago."

The presence of these fierce men, several of whom had already brushed against Stonio as they moved about the small area of the observatory, filled her heart with dread lest he might be recognised, and either instantly be cut to pieces or carried off to prison, whence death alone could release him.

She did not know how recently the stone-cutter had arrived in Lisbon, and how unfamiliar his features were to all in the city. Having recognised him in his disguise herself, she wondered that others did not, and was eager to clear the room of the guards.

"Captain Britto," she said, haughtily, "I am not used to such close presence of rude soldiers, and desire you to instantly withdraw with your men."

There was an anxiety in her eye and voice which did not escape the sharp officer, and it flashed upon his mind that after all it might be possible that Lady Hilda desired to conceal the hiding-place of the stone-cutter. He remembered that she had admitted having aided him already, and that she had said the fugitive had saved her life. It was very probable that her gratitude was causing her to still shield Stonio.

So indeed it was, but not in the way Britto imagined.

It was true, he might offend Lady Hilda by effecting the capture of the stone-cutter, but there was the great reward on the other hand; there was vengeance, too, upon the man who had slain his kinsman, Alvarez; there was fame and probable promotion for zeal in the king's service; and as all this swept through his mind in a flash, he hurried toward the ladder, saying:

"Pardon, Lady Hilda, duty demands that I shall examine the place above."

He ascended, and soon came down with a shadow of vexation and disappointment on his face, saying:

"He is not there."

"Did I not say so, Captain Britto?" observed Lady Hilda, with feigned anger. "My word, I suppose, is nothing with you. Again I desire you to withdraw with your men. I shall report you to the king for disrespect—"

"Pardon, Lady Hilda—" began the crestfallen officer.

"Silence! If you desire me to be silent in this matter, withdraw and leave this house," interrupted Lady Hilda.

"Oh, there is some mystery in this affair!" thought the officer. "She is pale; I think she trembles; I know her voice does, and it is not from anger. Who ever heard that Lady Hilda Montredores could fly into a rage? There is a secret here, and I shall think of it. Why, she could not be more excited were she concealing a lover! Out, men! Form in the street below, and we will pursue our search elsewhere. If the rascal is dead or alive, and above ground, I shall find him. Lady Hilda will of course pardon my zeal in the service of the king," he added, bowing, and keeping his sharp eyes upon the lady's pale face, which all her efforts failed to keep composed.

"Certainly," she said. "Do your duty always, sir."

"My duty, of course," he said; but adding in a whisper which reached her ear only, as he advanced with every semblance of profound respect and bowed towards her:

"My duty shall be forgotten—in your service, Lady Hilda."

"Oh, I have forgiven your want of respect in not being satisfied with my statement, Captain Britto."

All the guards had now withdrawn, and the officer, with a glance at the astronomer and the pretended secretary, whispered, anxious to gain her confidence, and to betray it, if treachery could serve him:

"If Lady Hilda desires it, I will not push this search for the stone-cutter."

"Others will," replied Lady Hilda, unguardedly.

There was a flush of triumph in the keen eyes of Captain Britto as he heard these words. They assured him that Lady Hilda desired the escape of the stone-cutter. To aid an outlawed man to escape, knowing him to be outlawed, was a capital crime. Joan Britto was inordinately ambitious. He had long admired the magnificent beauty of Lady Hilda, who seemed so far above him that he could only secretly admire and gnash his teeth in the impotency of his desires.

He was one of the satellites of Prince Enrique, whom he hated before Lady Hilda appeared at court; and he hated the prince all the more bitterly after the beauty of Lady Hilda had tormented his dreams, and he had learned that the dazzling heiress of Montredores was to become the Duchess del Sorno—wife of the man he hated while he served.

As a shadow of Prince Enrique he had often been in the presence of Lady Hilda, and from time to time received some gracious though careless notice from her, simply because she regarded him as one of the friends or companions of the man who was to be her husband.

Of the love that burned in his soul he had never dared to speak, guarding rigidly eye, tongue, and gesture, for he feared the merciless jealousy of the dark-hearted prince, and could not imagine that Prince Enrique did not as devotedly adore that heavenly beauty as himself.

But Joan Britto was ever awake to see a chance for advancement at court, and though he had never permitted Lady Hilda nor anyone else to suspect that his heart was devoured with a passion for her,

he was ever on the watch for an intrigue, and his acuteness now told him that he might gain some hold upon her confidence by aid of which he might afterwards dare to step more boldly.

Prince Enrique had been too cautious to take Joan Britto into his full confidence, and therefore Captain Britto was not one of the conspirators in the plot with which the sudden outbreak of the stone-cutters had seriously interfered. The prince was assured that his satellite would be of his party in the successfully begun revolution, and therefore had made no confidant of him in that matter. Still, the keen-witted officer had detected that something secret and formidable was afoot, and the events of the night had led him to suspect that a premature insurrection had been attempted, and if so, this Stonio, of whose prowess so much was said, must be concerned in it; and it was very evident that Lady Hilda desired the escape of Stonio.

Here then was a chance for Joan Britto to learn something of some mystery, no matter what, by which he might rise at court, or even into the favour of Lady Hilda, and therefore it was that he whispered:

"If Lady Hilda desires it, I will not push this search for the stone-cutter."

Her unguarded reply, "Others will," encouraged him to add:

"To me has the capture of Stonio, whoever he may be, been especially assigned, Lady Hilda. He saved your life, and you are desirous to serve him. Were you not Lady Hilda, and I but poor Joan Britto, I would say it is your duty to try to save him. Can I be of service to you, or to him? I wish to make arrangements for even appearing to doubt your ladyship's word."

Neither the astronomer nor the stone-cutter could hear a word of this whispered conversation. The eyes of the former remained steady in their gaze upon the intelligent but treacherous face of the officer, as if calmly reading every thought in his heart.

The gaze of the disguised stone-cutter was studying the features of the astronomer, in fact it had been much so engaged ever since he had heard him called by the terrified soldier, "Demetrius the Magician, the Wizard of Rome."

(To be continued.)

THE Viceroy of India has applied to the Home Government to send out a civil engineer, possessed of special experience, to be employed in examining the coast of India with a view of discovering sites for ports.

ENGLISH ERRORS IN ARCHITECTURE.—It is characteristic of Englishmen when dealing with artistic questions, that they frequently forget propriety and circumstance in carrying out their desires for reproducing forms of art which are admirable in other countries and climates and for other purposes. Thus our windy hills and bleak moors are studded with "Italian" villas, our smoky cities enriched with buildings which offer costly carvings to the destructive air and its deposits of soot. It was but the other day, at a tremendous cost, we finished in granite the parapets of the Thames Embankment, and wrought them, not in the grave manner of the Egyptians when dealing with the same material, or what would have been best, in a simple form of Gothic character, but with the elaborate, angular, and manifold mouldings of one of the noblest phases of Gothic art, which were wisely adapted for soft stone only. Thus we threw both money and labour away. London is rife with blunders like these. We spoiled a good arch and a tolerable colossal statue by bringing them together at Hyde Park Corner. Having got them there, and our blunder being obvious, we obstinately keep together what, if apart, would be ornaments, to form eyesores. A frightful sum was spent on the facade of the British Museum, and a colonnade erected to darken one of its most important galleries. We spoiled Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery by sticking in a small space in the middle of its large area a column which would have been an example of bad art, but is fatal where it is. Instances of such defective judgment are almost innumerable.

GUILLOTINING.—Does death instantly ensue on the head being severed from the body? is a question that has been much discussed since the execution of Tropmann. There appear to be very strong reasons for believing that death is not instantaneous. A letter from Dr. Pinel has expressed an opinion that not only is death delayed, but it is possible that it may be postponed for two hours, or even more, the head remaining not only alive, but capable of sensation, during the interval. The subject is so painfully interesting, and in the cause of humanity so important, that we offer no apology for recurring to it. The physiological facts are simple. The head is the animal proper; the body is but an appendage for the purposes of ministering to its sustenance and ful-

filling its behests. The trunk is an apparatus constructed to act as the reservoir of food. It stands to the head exactly in the same relation as a railway tender to the locomotive engine with which it is connected. It contains the store-house of fuel and other necessities: the digestive organs to appropriate and prepare the supplies contributed from without; the lungs to expose the blood to the air for the purposes of oxygenation and decarbonization; the heart to circulate the blood, which, as everybody knows, is the vehicle of life and food. These organs are essential to life, but only because they minister to the head, in common with the rest of the body, the materials which it requires. The head can live after its separation from the body just so long as the last supply of nutriment will suffice for it. The extremities, as too many unfortunately find by experience, are dispensable. The head is the seat of life, and this life is only indirectly terminated by cutting off the supplies, or, in other words, by starving to death, but it should be understood and ought certainly to have some effect upon a humane people in determining whether they really mean to inflict the unparalleled agony of such a death on the victim of justice. Imagine for one moment the terror of being conscious all through the fall of the axe—which, from what we know of dreams, may seem an age—and afterwards until faintness supervenes. It is true, as Dr. Pinel points out, that the blood which flows from the head comes chiefly from the great vessels of the neck, not from those of the brain. Moreover, the small arteries contract and retain the blood, and even continue to propel it by their own contractile force, so that the brain, except by consciousness and pain, is not aware of the loss of the body until the last particle of blood which has entered its arteries has been forced through the brain and nourished it. It is even possible that the wound quickens the sensory nervous system to increased action for the time. The inability to move is of course no proof of incapacity for feeling; the fixed points of most of the muscles are removed by the severance from the body. It is possible that the eyes may move even consciously, but this is doubtful. It is, however, more than probable that the poor wretch sees, hears, and retains all the faculties of special sense in their acuteness for an awful moment of uncertain duration after his execution.

CROSSING THE CHANNEL.—At length a scheme in outline has been laid before the public which promises to put the desideratum of improved communication between England and France within our reach at a moderate risk and cost. Of course, we do not refer to the proposal to drive a tunnel beneath the bed of the sea from England to France, nor to that which, at the expense of about thirty millions sterling, would carry a line across the Straits upon 190 towers at a height of 500 ft. above the sea level. We do not doubt that modern science is equal to either of these feats, but we seriously question whether they could ever pay the cost of their construction, and, still more, whether capitalists would ever have faith enough to subscribe the indispensable wherewithal. We dismiss them from consideration, therefore, as, in a commercial sense, impracticable. The scheme to which we allude as a hopeful one is that of Mr. John Fowler. The main features of it may be described in few words. It is designed to carry an unbroken line of communication between shore and shore, not above, or beneath, but upon, the sea, by means of "large ferry-boats, of 450 ft. in length and proportionate breadth, drawing about twelve feet of water, which, from their size and form, will be nearly free from all tossing and rolling in the heaviest Channel seas." Between the upper and main decks of these boats an entire train of carriages would pass from and to the lines of railway, without making it necessary for the passengers to alight from them, unless they should prefer to avail themselves of the accommodation of "well-lighted and well-warmed saloons, with means of reading, writing, &c., which will make the sea voyage the most agreeable part of the journey." Under the main-deck goods-trucks are to be carried, the weight of which will serve as ballast to the vessel, and increase its steadiness. The passage (say from Dover to Audresselles) will be made in an hour, and the transfer of the carriages between the railway and the boats on each side of the Straits will be effected within five minutes by hydraulic apparatus. The great recommendations of this project are that it will not require an enormous outlay; that it may be made fully available for its purpose within two years, and that it will reduce to the merest trifle, even if it do not altogether get rid of, the usual annoyance and peril of a sea passage. Preliminary steps, we understand, are already in progress for ascertaining what point of the French coast offers the most advantageous site for a landing-port, and there seems to be a strong probability that the enterprise will be carried into effect.

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[SOLE SURVIVORS OF THE PIRATE CREW.]

## THE VICTIM OF FATE.

## CHAPTER XVI.

MORNING came at last, and there was a tap at the state-room door. The marquis opened it, and admitted the young man whose frank countenance had struck him on the previous evening. He was very grave.

He sat down beside the marquis, and said :

"Sir, I am assigned the duty of acting as your second in the singular encounter which the strange man I am serving under has arranged between you and himself for reasons known only to him."

"It matters little who serves me as second," replied the marquis, "If Heaven favours me in this contest, I suppose you and your fellow hounds will avenge the fall of their leader, in spite of his pledges."

"You do wrong to class me with them," said the young man, sadly. "I am among them, but not of them. Since I have been in the service I have struck no blow at an honest man, and when it has been my duty to point a gun, I have taken care that the shot should do no injury."

"Why are you here, then?" asked the marquis, in surprise.

"To identify, to unmask, and, if occasion offers, to arrest and bring to justice the atrocious ruffian, who has so long been the scourge of the Antilles," replied the young seaman, speaking in a whisper.

"For this purpose alone I came on board the accursed barque. I could have killed her captain by a random shot in more than one of our engagements, but that would not satisfy me. I reserved him for the gallows. Still, if he falls by your hand, so be it. I have his confidence, and that of his crew, and succeed him in the command. Once master of the barque, I shall take her into a place where she will be surrounded by a fleet of Spanish armed vessels. I am the only one on board, besides the commander, who can sail her—even Rodrigo Silva knows nothing of navigation. When I enlisted I gave the name of Gaspar—my full name is Gaspar Perez. I have been first mate of a trading-vessel, and volunteered in this desperate service with the knowledge of the Spanish admiralty, less in the hope of a reward than in that of bringing to his deserts a man the more to be dreaded because he has talents, education, energy, and indomitable courage, all perverted to the destruction of his fellow-creatures. I have spoken of your success, but I will not disguise from you—for you are a brave man—that

your chance is one of a thousand. The man is equally adroit in the use of all weapons. You have chosen the pistol. Now I have seen him do more than snuff a candle or split a bullet on a knife-blade at twenty paces. I have seen him put nine bullets out of ten through the eyelet of a reef-point in the main topsail. Now, if you fall, is there anything I can do for you—any last command that I can fulfil?"

"I have written a letter to my wife," said the marquis, and his voice faltered. "Will you take charge of it? You will find it addressed to the care of her solicitor; but you must see poor Coralline, and tell her of my last moments."

"If I live and escape, I will do your errand," answered Gaspar.

"I trust you," replied the marquis. "But you must promise me that no eye but yours shall ever look even at the outside of this letter. Should this villain, Pedro Ramon, discover Coralline's address, he will find means of reaching her, and then worse than death would befall her."

"Trust to me," said Gaspar. "I have possession of papers that would cost me my life if the pirate knew their contents. Your letter shall go with them, and I will destroy it if I cannot deliver it."

The marquis surrendered the letter to the charge of the young adventurer.

"Are you aware," asked the latter, "that you are not the only prisoner on board the barque?"

"Who else are in the clutches of the fiend?" inquired the marquis.

"An old lady taken from your ship."

"Mademoiselle Armantine Lasalle, my poor wife's aunt," said the marquis. "What will be her fate?"

"I know not," said Gaspar, sadly. "She was taken by one of the crew, and as she is neither young nor beautiful, he will decide on the manner of her death. But she is doomed—Pedro Ramon makes away with all his prisoners."

"Poor Mademoiselle Armantine!" said the marquis.

"Are you ready now?" asked Gaspar, softly.

"Quite ready," replied the marquis. "I have prayed—I have written to my wife—I have nothing more to do."

"One moment," said Gaspar, with his hand upon the door-lock. "You are to be placed face to face, fifteen paces apart. I am to give the word. Fire instantly—it is your only chance."

"I thank you for the counsel," said the marquis, pressing the young man's hand.

When they came on deck together, the sun had just burst from the horizon, flooding the waves with crimson splendour and tinging the broad sails with the same ruddy hue. Over a gently undulating surface, impelled by a fine but light wind, the barque stretched slowly along her course. It was a lovely morning, serene and smiling as if no deeds of death were doing beneath the sun-bright arch of heaven.

The crew were mustered, and they were dressed in such a variety of costume that they looked like a bevy of carnival masqueraders, for they had put on every species of finery their numerous captures had supplied them with. One man, whose whole dress consisted of a pair of canvas trousers, had twisted a costly cashmere shawl round his waist, in which were stuck a pistol and a sheath-knife. Another had donned the scarlet uniform of a British officer, a third, a priest's cassock and band, while a few, not long removed from their native wilderness, wore nothing but a waistcoat.

With that morbid acuteness of perception which is strongly developed in moments of extreme peril, the marquis noted every feature of this strange, wild scene. The grotesqueness of some of the figures even provoked a smile from his pale lips.

Removing his gaze from the crew, he beheld the Spanish outlaw, who saluted him with a bow. Old Rodrigo Silva and Gaspar offered the French nobleman the choice of a pair of heavy navy-pistols, and then measured the distance and placed the men, facing each other, in the shadow of a sail.

Gaspar stepped backward from the line of fire, and asked :

"Are you ready?"

"Ready!" replied two voices, equally stern and steady.

"Fire!" cried Gaspar.

Two reports, nearly simultaneous, followed, but with varying results. Montrose's pistol-ball grazed the outlaw's cheek and severed a dark lock from his head, while the Spaniard's missile pierced the brave heart of the French marquis, who sprang upward with a convulsive movement and then fell back on the deck with a heavy thud. His lips moved a little, and Gaspar, who bent over him, thought he uttered the word "Coralline," but it was a death-whisper—almost unintelligible.

The slayer cast one proud glance at his crew, who witnessed this new proof of almost supernatural dexterity with awe and admiration, and his features were as composed as if he wore a mask of marble.

"Is he dead?" he asked sternly of Gaspar, who was examining the fallen man.

"Stone dead," answered Gaspar, almost reproachfully.

"Then tie a forty-two pound shot to his feet and throw him overboard," ordered the outlaw, in the same unmoved tone. "Let him sink in his uniform as he lived—a braver man never wore it."

The body of the French captain, weighted with iron, was about to be committed to the deep, when the outlaw again spoke:

"Hold! He shall have a fitting shroud."

He left the deck for a moment, and returned, bringing with him the flag of the Invincible.

"Put that about him, Gaspar," he said.

The young man performed this last office, and then four of the crew, lifting the body over the vessel's side, dropped it into the deep. The outlaw, bending over the bulwark, watched the plunge of the corpse with a fixed, stony gaze. As the head disappeared, there was a commotion in the waters, and another dark mass followed it—a shark that had been swimming round the vessel with only his back fin visible.

The outlaw turned away with a shudder.

Zampa approached him.

"Captain," said he, "don't forget that my prisoner is still alive."

"Deal with her as you please," replied the outlaw, "and see that no one disturbs me till to-morrow. Whoever intrudes upon my privacy takes his life in his hands."

He disappeared down the gangway, strode to his state-room, and looked himself in.

Zampa followed him, and after shrouding his head and form in a cloak, took out a key and unlocked the door of another state-room—that in which Mademoiselle Lasalle had been imprisoned for nearly a day.

The aged woman was seated on a transom—her head bowed down on her breast, and a small cross of gold clasped in her hands.

She looked up as the door opened and closed, and her visitor stood with his back against it.

"Are you the captain of this ship?" she asked.

Zampa shook his head.

"What has become of the frigate?"

"Sunk," he replied.

"And the marquis?"

"Shot."

"And what is to be my fate?" asked the unhappy woman.

"Death," replied Zampa.

Armantine Lasalle did not quail. She came of that race whose boast it was that even if the arch of Heaven should sink they would sustain it on their lance-points—a race which was destined soon after to furnish to the revolutionary guillotine thousands of illustrious victims—men, women, and even children, and not one of whom stooped to beg mercy, or showed a sign of fear upon the fatal scaffold.

It was a moment of horror when she was carried on board the barque through a storm of shot and steel, and knew that she was a prisoner on a pirate ship. But from that time she dismissed all weak tremblings and vain hopes, and nerved herself to meet her certain fate.

She had passed the night in prayer, and now the announcement of her doom sent but a momentary shudder through her frame.

"Miserable woman!" said Zampa, flinging off his cloak—"look at me. Do you know me?"

"Yes," replied the prisoner, disdainfully; "you are Zampa."

"Do you remember that the scourge was laid on my back by your orders?"

"Perfectly. I was foolish. I sentenced you to forty lashes; I should have given you a hundred."

"What became of my mother?" asked Zampa.

"You have probably heard by this time," answered Mademoiselle Lasalle. "If not, I can tell you very briefly. She tried to poison me, and I made her swallow the same venom she prepared for me."

"Yes, vile murderer, but you little dreamed that the same fate was reserved for you," replied the man. "Prepare to die."

"I am prepared."

A goblet of water was standing on the table.

Zampa took from his breast a small phial, and poured the contents into the water, which instantly became turbid, and emitted a nauseating smell.

He then handed the vessel to the prisoner.

"Have you put in enough?" asked the prisoner, calmly, "or do you mean to inflict lingering torture upon me?"

"Drink!" was the only word vouchsafed in answer.

Armantine raised the goblet steadily to her lips, drained it to the bottom, and then set it on the table, after which she folded her shawl about her head and person, and reclined on the transom.

The man fixed his eyes on her shrouded form.

The woman's drapery was shaken by a convulsive movement, accompanied by low moans for a few minutes, and then all was still.

The man removed the shawl, and there lay a

rigid figure, the lips tightly compressed, the eyes staring wide open. There was something so terrible in the stony glare of those sightless orbs, that even the avenger hastened to shroud them again.

"Mother," he muttered, looking upward, "you are avenged! But I must finish my work."

With a shudder that he could not repress, he lifted the lifeless form and bore it on deck, where he attached a weight to its feet and threw it overboard.

The outlaw did not emerge from his seclusion until the next day, when he came on deck, looking stern, careworn, and haggard.

Gaspar and Silva saluted him in silence, but Zampa approached him, and said, in a low voice:

"Thanks, captain—you had your vengeance, and you gave me mine!"

"What have you done with her?" asked the outlaw.

"There," replied Zampa, pointing to the water, to signify that it covered his victim.

But he started back in horror, and grasped the arm of Ramon.

"What is the matter?" cried Ramon, eagerly.

"Speak!"

"Look there," replied Zampa, with a shudder.

The outlaw gazed in the direction of Zampa's trembling finger, and then beheld a spectacle which thrilled even his nerves of steel.

The weight destined to sink the dead woman was too light, and she had risen, head and shoulders above the water, and was following the barque, the action of the waves giving a mockery of life to the horrible spectre. The right arm, buoyed up by the billows, was pointing in the direction of the vessel, as if it extended in conscious menace.

The pirates were soon aware of the spectacle, and gazed at it, muttering that it was ominous; and many a vengeful glance was cast at Zampa, as if he had brought ill-luck on the vessel and crew.

The two stern chasers were brought to bear on the threatening phantom, and the outlaw pointed and fired them with his own hand.

Both shots took effect, for when the smoke rose the ill-omened apparition was no longer seen. But the incident left a bad impression on the men, nearly every one of whom was ignorant and superstitious.

After moody discussion they settled down into the conviction that it was no tangible body that had followed them, but a spectre, and that henceforth they were doomed to dwell in a haunted ship.

## CHAPTER XVII.

MANY days, unmarked by any incident worthy of record, followed the cruel events it has been our duty to recount. During the interval, the crew of the corsair exhibited many symptoms of weariness and discontent. They were gathered in groups on deck, jabbering and muttering, and expressing dissatisfaction at their forced idleness.

"Their captain was acting strangely," they said. "Instead of diligently searching for prizes, he allowed the direction of the wind to determine his course, and when danger threatened, he ran right into its jaws, as if he wished to destroy his vessel. The fight with the French frigate had cost them some of their best men—and what better off were they for it?"

During this period of inaction, the outlaw had remained for the most part secluded in his cabin, only showing himself on deck for a few moments at a time, merely to cast a glance at the sails. The tall-tale compass, let into the ceiling of the cabin, showed him as he sat below that his instructions as to the vessel's course were obeyed, and the officer of the deck reported to him regularly at the completion of his turn of duty.

Plunged in reverie, brooding over memories and plans which he confided to no one, the Spanish outlaw showed himself impotent of any intrusion on his solitude. But one day Rodrigo Silva took it upon him to brave his displeasure by seeking an interview with him.

He found the outlaw seated at his table, with his head resting on his hand. An open book lay face downwards on the cloth, a goblet of wine stood untasted at his elbow—there were writing materials before him, but not a line on the uppermost sheet of paper.

As Silva dropped himself heavily into a chair, the outlaw started, raised his head, and looked at him angrily.

"What is your business with me? who sent for you? How dare you disturb me in this way?"

"This is curt greeting, shipmate!" growled the old man-of-war's-man.

"Shipmate!" echoed the outlaw, scornfully.

"Aye—shipmate?" replied old Rodrigo, undauntedly. "Come, come, Don Ramon, don't try any of your black looks on me. You are captain of the barque, and when you don't shirk your duty, I and all the rest are ready to follow you to the death. But

when you shut yourself up below, leave the ship in command of that young springald—I don't mean to say that he isn't a good seaman—do nothing and order nothing for days and days, you can't wonder that the men murmur."

"So they murmur—do they?" remarked the outlaw, scornfully. "Well—what is that to me?"

"Everything," said Silva. "You yourself changed them from chattels into men, and if they mutiny, what can two or three men do against a horde of savages? I haven't the influence over them I might have—Gaspar, a new-comer, they know nothing about."

"Well—well," said the outlaw, impatiently; "what do you wish me to do?"

"To shake off this lethargy," answered Silva—to show yourself among them—to speak them fair—to say something to them to keep them quiet."

The outlaw knit his brow and reflected for a moment—then he said:

"Go on deck and muster the crew—I will follow you directly."

Rodrigo retired, and immediately afterwards his shrill whistle was heard.

"So—so," muttered the outlaw to himself, "I must stoop to this rabbble, must I? It seems so."

He dressed himself with great care—buckled to his side a splendidly-mounted sabre, stuck his pistols in his belt, and put a fresh, clean Panama on his head. His loose trousers, easy-fitting sack and shirt open at the throat displayed to the best advantage his muscular, lithe and active figure, the strength and symmetry of which might challenge the admiration of man or woman. The fiend had not yet set upon his brow the signet with which sooner or later he brands every one of his vassals. His face still shone with masculine beauty.

Mounting to the quarter-deck with a light step, he was received by the assembled crew with a hearty cheer, prompted, it is true, and led off by Rodrigo Silva.

"Well, shipmates," said he, gracefully acknowledging the compliment by removing his hat, "I am glad to see you in such fine spirits this morning; it shows that you haven't forgotten our last victory. But I'm told there are some grumblers among you."

"No—no," protested Silva, and parrot-like the crew repeated the negative.

"It is useless to deny it, my friend," continued the outlaw, "I can read what is passing in your minds. You complain that we have made no prizes of late. Now, do you know the reason?—we have made ourselves such a terror that the birds are getting shy. I might, it is true, if I had chosen, have hunted up a stray sail here or there—but I have purposely kept out of the way, for I wish to convey the impression that I have gone into other latitudes, and then when nothing has been seen or heard of us for a long time, the traders will take courage, and the Gulf be again whitened with their canvas. Then we will swoop down into the flock and take our pick, instead of having to put up with a molassee schooner on a sugar-draff of no earthly use to us. You may have thought it was foolhardy and useless for me to attack the frigate—but you must remember that I ran away from her at first, and only fought her when I was certain of victory. If I had not done so, if I had not returned and sunk her, do you not think, after she had once found out our rig and tonnage, she would have followed us up and taken us at disadvantage? She was a dangerous enemy, and so we destroyed her. But I have had enough of fighting—my object, as well as yours, is plunder. We can afford to wait. We have full and plenty on board, and you know that I am no niggard of my stores. If I have kept apart from you for some days, it was that I might lay plans for a successful cruise. I was occupied all the time with your interests. If you think my views differ from yours, you are very much mistaken—we are all outlaws, and we must sink or swim or hang together."

He paused, and a spontaneous cheer testified the approbation and good will of the crew.

"Now, shipmates," said the outlaw, in conclusion. "Let us have a jubilee to celebrate our victory over the Frenchman. Bring out the fiddle and the banjo, and make yourselves merry to your hearts' content."

If the exordium of the outlaw's oration was happy in its carelessness, his peroration was no less felicitous, and though his gaiety was as forced as Iago's when he urged Michael Cassio to conviviality, still none of the ignorant blacks knew that it came from a joyless and rayless heart. They responded cordially to his invitation, and the deck of the corsair was given up to revelry.

Rodrigo distributed biscuit, cheese, smoked beef, confectionery, preserves, rum, claret, and sugar with a liberal hand. Some of the buccaneers got up an impromptu masquerade, the younger and more active putting on female dresses. A little band of amateur musicians also arrayed themselves in female apparel, and powdered their crisp locks with flour. Several of them wore necklaces and ear-rings of

genuine goma. Untroubled by any sense of moral responsibility they frolicked as carelessly as they fought fiercely, and cared as little for the halter that awaited them prospectively as for the batteries they braved in their desperate engagements.

When they were tired of dancing, they fell to on the refreshments with the appetites of sharks, and washed down their food with copious draughts of wine and punch.

The outlaw called his lieutenant aside.

"Gaspar," said he, "I have observed you never drink—a commendable virtue. You will, therefore, please act as butler to these demi-savages; let them have plenty, but not too much. I usually entrusted this office to Silva, but of late I have noticed that the old sea-dog is getting rather too fond of his grog, and it won't do to give a blind man the leadership of the blind."

"I accept the trust," replied Gaspar, with a bright smile. "Rely upon it, I shall do my duty."

The outlaw relieved the man at the wheel, and sent him forward to enjoy himself among his shipmates. Zampa, who had fallen in the estimation of his fellows, and who had no desire to participate in their revel, kept near his commander, ready to receive and execute any order he might give.

There was a breeze blowing, and the barque worked to windward, obeying her helm faithfully, and dashing off the spray from her sharp bow. Every stay was taut and true, yet there were bunches of oakum and clumsy knots fastened to the rigging, so that it might appear rotten, neglected, and awkwardly spliced when seen through a distant glass. So with the canvas, there was not a hole, a rent, or a patch in the huge sails, the fabrication of which had consumed many a bolt of costly Russia duck, yet they were artistically smeared with stains of brown paint, and looked even at a little distance as if they were so many masses of patchwork that a slight squall would rend to ribbons or blow out of the bolt-ropes.

Gaspar went about among the men, dispensing the grog, Silva performing the humble office of serving out the viands. Old Rodrigo looked with an evil eye upon his associates, and bore him no goodwill for having relieved him of his usual duty, though aware that the change had been the captain's doing. Not daring to quarrel with an arrangement made by the highest authority, he solaced himself, first, by grumbling in an under tone, then by repeated draughts of French brandy; and though he was a hardened topor, yet his limitless indulgence began finally to tell upon him. He rolled away to the forward deck, taking care to keep out of the scope of the outlaw's keen glance, sat down on a spar, and drownded out the chorus of his favourite ditty: "And when the liquor it is cut, and the locker it is low, Then to see once more in the ebony trade 'Twill be time for us to go!"

And he then fell fast asleep.

The buccaneers found their lieutenant no niggardly cup-bearer. The moment a man reached him forth his can, it was filled to the brim. But no quarelling or noise followed.

"The moment you make a noise," said he, "that moment I stop your grog. If you are noisy I shall know that you are getting too much."

Therefore the pirates, preferring liquor to uproar, sat silently saturating themselves with the stimulants unstintingly served out to them.

Once, when the lieutenant stepped aft to exchange a word with the captain, the latter complimented him on the perfect order he had succeeded in keeping among the crew.

It was near nightfall, and the captain had retired to his cabin, leaving Zampa at the wheel, when the look-out on the main-top reported a sail off the leeward. He should have done so long before, but the bottle of liquor which Gaspar had allowed him to slip into his pocket when he went aloft, had much to do with his lack of vigilance.

Gaspar, who had removed the remains of the feast, the crew having become completely gorged and stupefied, and having retired to sleep off the fumes of their debauch, seized a glass and scanned the stranger, who was bearing down on them with all his canvas set, before a humming breeze, the distance between the two vessels lessening every moment, since the pirate was lying close to the wind, and the other vessel running free.

His countenance brightened as he noticed that she was an armed brig under Spanish colours, mounting perhaps twenty guns, spreading a cloud of canvas.

"If my eyes do not deceive me," he thought, "that is the Santissima Maria, Captain Olivarez."

A shot fired across the pirate's bow summoned her to show her colours.

The report brought the outlaw on deck.

"When did you make her out?" he asked, sternly.

"This moment," answered the lieutenant.

"You have neglected your duty," replied the outlaw. "Why didn't you put the barque before the wind?"

"I had no orders," answered Gaspar.

"Fool!" retorted the captain. "But this is no time to waste words."

He instantly issued the necessary orders, the barque reversed her course, and all sail was made on her.

The manœuvre, however, was not executed with the magical promptitude that had hitherto characterised the seamanship of the rover, the delay occurring from the stupefied condition of the crew; so that when the vessel came before the wind, the armed brig was close in her wake, so near, indeed, that a shot from her pivot-gun came crashing through the bulwarks of the corsair, sweeping a trail of splinters across the deck.

The outlaw pointed one of the stern chasers on the brig, and Gaspar was preparing to sight the other, when the captain thundered out:

"Leave that gun alone and send Rodrigo Silva to me. Zampa, keep before the wind; see to it that she does not vary a single point."

He fired his gun, and then, springing on the carriage, watched the effect of his shot. A cloud of splinters from the bow of the brig answered the impact of the iron missile.

At that instant a strange noise caused the outlaw to look upward.

The maintop-sail, blown out of the bolt ropes, was flapping fiercely in the air.

"Sight that other gun!" exclaimed the outlaw to Silva, who now presented himself before his commander. One glance of the rover's keen eye detected the condition of the sailor.

With a deep oath, he drew his cutlass, and dealt him such a blow with the flat of the blade that he felled the old seaman to the deck.

"Lie there!" he muttered through his teeth.

The buccaneers had staggered to their guns, had loaded them, and run them out, without waiting for orders.

The outlaw flew to the batteries, and called the men from their quarters.

"We must not fight, but fly," he said to the few who were comparatively sober enough to understand him.

At that moment the Spanish brig, thrown up into the wind for a moment, delivered a broadside with terrible effect. The air was full of splinters, the deck of the barque covered with dead and wounded, the rigging cut as if with knives.

"We may yet escape," muttered the outlaw.

"But first for that villain Gaspar."

He had a cocked pistol in his hand, and looked round for the man who, he was now convinced, had played him false. Gaspar was in the act of climbing out of the main hatchway. The outlaw fired but missed. Before he could draw another pistol, Gaspar had sprung on the rail, and plunged overboard. Diving deep he came to the surface at some distance, and was seen swimming towards the gun brig, which launched a boat to take him in. His treachery was now patent.

But it was no time to think even of such an event as this—the vital point was to make sail, and in spite of her crippled condition the barque began to exhibit her superior speed.

The manœuvre executed by the gun brig for the purpose of delivering her broadside, had cost her some valuable moments, and fortune seemed once more to smile upon the corsair.

The wind had now risen to a gale, and the barque flew before it like a storm-bird. On the other hand, the brig was falling astern, and moreover she was soon seen to be reducing her canvas.

"Hurrah!" shouted the outlaw; "my star is once more in the ascendant. We shall be saved as sure as fate."

But Zampa came up to him with a troubled face, and whispered something in his ear.

"A leak, you say!" muttered the corsair. "It must be stopped."

"Impossible!" replied Zampa. "Hark! don't you hear the water rushing in? The barque has been soulted."

"We must take to the boats!" said the outlaw.

At that moment a tremendous explosion took place, and all was over in an instant of time. The fate of the French frigate had overtaken her victor. By treachery or accident the magazine had been fired. If Gaspar had been the doer of this deed, he had made sure work of it, whether he lived to enjoy his triumph or sank beneath the waters of the Gulf.

When the sun rose upon the Florida shore next day, it looked down on the sole survivors of the wreck—the outlaw and Zampa. Thrown far into the sea by the explosion, they swam bravely till they secured a fragment of the wreck, on which they drifted towards the shore. Zampa would have perished but for the exertions of the Spaniard, who revived his courage when it was sinking, and lashed him to the spar when his strength was failing. With the dawn of the day they found themselves among the rocks, and a second struggle for existence ensued. Bruised and bleeding, they at last found themselves above high-water mark.

"I know not what impelled me to struggle," said the outlaw, gloomily. "Stripped a second time of all, except these diamonds on my fingers, a hunted outlaw, what lies before me but misery and a shameful death? The fortune I pursued has again escaped me."

"Master," said Zampa, "you have saved my life. I have nothing now to pay you with but a secret which may be worth a fortune to you."

The outlaw listened incredulously: he was too familiar with the fervid imagination and habitual exaggerations of Zampa's secrets.

"Master, as true as we sit here, I know where there is a hidden treasure."

The outlaw smiled incredulously.

"Don't laugh, master," said Zampa. "In the cave on the shore of St. Domingo, where we kept our boat, and where I passed many days alone, I made a discovery. Hidden among weeds and rubbish there is a trap-door, which covers a recess that I explored one day. There I found gold and silver coins, and an immense quantity of jewellery—diamonds, cut and uncut, set and unset—pearls, crosses, medallions. It was a splendid sight."

"And you took nothing?"

"Nothing," answered Zampa.

"A likely story!" said the outlaw.

"It is true," said Zampa, resolutely. "I took nothing, and I concealed the treasure more carefully than it was hidden before. I reserved it for a sacred purpose—to insure the success of the cause I have at heart—a revolution of the coloured race."

"And have you given up your revolutionary plans?" asked the outlaw.

"No, for the Vandoor has assured me that they will be successful. To free my countrymen is the wish of my heart, as wealth is the object of yours. You have saved my life; therefore half of this treasure is yours, and I will share it with you."

The outlaw mused.

"There may be something in this," he said. "From what you say of the contents of this hiding-place, it may be a pirate's treasure. If so, it clearly belongs to us. But how to reach it is a puzzle. We must be disguised completely, for in the Spanish islands we move with a halter about our necks. In the meantime we are starving."

"Not quite," answered the black. "There are oysters on the rocks below, and fruits grow wild in the groves here."

"Courage, then," said the outlaw. "I saved you from the sharks: I will save both our necks from the halter."

(To be continued.)

**THE GIRL OF THE PERIOD.**—This creature was brought into existence by an active contemporary, always eager to discover new things for our delectation, new and spicy dishes to stimulate our jaded palates; but she has deserted her fond father, and has a magazine, if not a journal, of her own. Were we to believe a good many contemporary writers, we should regard the majority of English girls as very knowing in all things improper, very "fast" in their behaviour, apt to tread upon the verge of ice. Is this true? Do we find such unpleasant young women in the houses of our friends? Are not most of the girls we meet modest, intelligent, quiet in dress and demeanour? Surely the "girl of the period," in her supreme atrocity, is a hideous creation of some bewildered brain—a kind of newspaper nightmare.

**WATER AND LIFE.**—Except in special cases, water of moderate hardness, like that supplied to the metropolis, to Paris, and Vienna is always to be preferred, and is best suited for domestic purposes, because of its being brighter to the eye and more agreeable to the taste. So satisfied, indeed, were the French authorities on this head, that they passed by the soft waters of the sandy plains near Paris, and went far away to the chalk hills of Champagne, where they found a water which is even harder than that supplied to London. One important consideration which strongly influenced them in their decision was the fact that more conscripts are rejected in the soft-water districts, on account of imperfect development and stunted growth, than in the hard; and they conclude that calcareous matter in water is essential to the formation of tissues. In this country, also, it is remarkable that, wherever soft water is supplied to the people, the mortality is large, even when allowance is made for the birth-rate of the place. Glasgow, for example, as well as Preston, Dundee, Sheffield, Plymouth, Manchester, Bradford, &c., which are all supplied with water of less than four degrees of hardness, have a mortality which ranges from 36 to 38 per 1,000; while at Birmingham, Bristol, Sunderland, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Wakefield, Dover, Norwich, Croydon, Worcester, Derby, and other places, where the waters are hard, the mortality is considerably less; in fact, it may be said that in towns supplied with water of more than ten

degrees of hardness, the average mortality is about 22 per 1,000, while in those supplied with softer water it is about 26 per 1,000. It may well be, as the late Professor Johnston observed, that "the bright sparkling hard waters which gush out in frequent springs from our chalk and other limestone rocks are relished to drink, not merely because they are grateful to the eye, but because there is something exhilarating in the excess of carbonic acid they contain and give off; and because the lime they hold in solution removes acid matters from the stomach, and thus acts as a grateful medicine to the system. To abandon the use of such a water, and to drink daily in its stead one entirely free from mineral matter, so far from improving the health, may injure it. The water of country may determine the diet of its inhabitants. The soft water of the lakes of Scotland may have had much to do with the use of brown meal; and but for the calcareous waters of Ireland the potato could not have become a national food.

## DANGEROUS GROUND;

ON,  
SHE WOULD BE A COUNTESS.  
BY THE AUTHOR OF  
*"Heart's Content," "Tempting Fortune," &c., &c.*

### CHAPTER XXXII.

And lovelier things have mercy shown  
To every failing but their own;  
And every woe a tear can claim,  
Except an erring sister's shame. *Byron.*

Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!  
The evening boat that smiles the clouds away,  
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray. *Ibid.*

The sun was shining brightly, and the fresh country roads looking very green and pleasant, although the dust would provokingly rise in clouds at every passing vehicle, and the fields waved with golden corn or market produce. The orchards were giving a magnificent promise, for already the branches of the trees were weighed down with the rosy fruit, and the birds were singing gaily—the lark, conspicuous above all, poising itself in mid air and trilling forth its divine notes.

Amanda had never been in better spirits or more full of hope and confidence in the future as she was on this beautiful morning in the height of the London season, as she drove, according to custom, in her own carriage, through the park and along the pleasant roads and lanes of Surrey to Richmond, in order to pay her daily visit to Maxwell.

The air was fragrant with the odour of a thousand flowers, the very leaves of the trees seemed to give out a subtle perfume, which, mingling with the balmy breeze, was inexpressibly delicious; and when Richmond Park was reached, the red deer bounded with playful antics within a few yards of the carriage, their antlered heads sometimes high in air and sniffing the breeze as if to scent an enemy. Splendid trees were grouped on every side, and here and there sheets of water lay like glass in sheltered glades.

Amanda thought as she drove along how like all this was to that ancient park of Montargis which she coveted to possess, and her busy brain began to work, as she sketched out for herself new plans of action, and wondered how she could prove Maxwell's case.

Little dreamed she that the bird she fancied so securely caged was flown. As usual a servant opened the door, and she walked into a room set aside for visitors, expecting Maxwell to join her in a few minutes, which he generally did. What was her surprise to see the doctor enter, wearing a grave and anxious expression on his face? Amanda's heart fell and her voice faltered, for her instincts told her something was wrong. Scarcely could she utter the words, "Where is Mr. Maxwell?" and she went very pale as the doctor made answer:

"I was hoping against hope that you had seen him!" he answered. "We know nothing of him since yesterday afternoon, when some ladies and gentlemen residing with me noticed him talking to a stranger, who linked his arm in his and took him away; but who this stranger was, or where he has taken Maxwell to, I have not the remotest idea. Believe me, I am very sorry, but as we exercise no restraint of a physical kind, I could not prevent the occurrence."

"His enemies, my enemies have found him," said Amanda, in a tone of despair. "I fear he is lost for ever this time. In London his identity will be obscured, and I must admit that the Earl of Montargis has defeated me. I have made you my confidant to a great extent, doctor, and you know why Montargis has reason to dread this young man. Can you help

me in my distress, supply me with an idea, or tell me what I ought to do?"

"Put the affair in the hands of the police, I should say," answered the doctor. "Give a description of the man, and promise a handsome reward for his recovery. I have no very high opinion of the skill of the police, but in a case of this sort I don't know but that you might find them useful. It is an unfortunate business, and I sympathise very deeply with you; but we hope that you will soon find the poor fellow, and in future contrive to avoid the persecutions of your foes."

Amanda felt that she could not in justice blame Dr. Laxton, who could not keep a perpetual watch on all his patients, and that her carelessness had brought about the misfortune.

The doctor promised to let her know at once if Maxwell returned or any news was heard of him, and she re-entered her carriage, ordering the coachman to drive slowly through Richmond Park. Leaning back on the luxurious cushions she gave herself up to contemplation, and her high spirits of the morning experienced a reaction most painful to bear. She for a moment indulged an inclination which had occurred to her frequently of late, to give up the chase after a coronet and retire abroad and live there on her ample fortune, but the tempter was at her elbow, and the voice of ambition urged her on. She thought that she had taken the tide at the flood, and that it must lead to fortune if she steered her frail bark properly.

Suddenly a shock which nearly threw her forward on the seat in front of her, caused her to look up.

The road was narrow, and her carriage had come rather violently in contact with another, the rival coachmen refusing to give way to each other. Fortunately little harm was done, as only the wheels had come together. Still the drivers descended from their respective boxes, and with many a sagacious shake of the head, examined the damage, uttering subdued comments, each on the clumsiness and bad driving of the other.

The occupants of the other carriage were two ladies, elegantly dressed; one was young, the other elderly.

Amanda stared at them, and was astonished to recognise her sister.

"Fanny!" she exclaimed, wondering what singular change of fortune had placed her in the position she occupied.

Fanny in a carriage, and dressed as a lady of fashion and wealth! What next? She would as soon have thought of seeing her father in the uniform of a general officer.

"It is my sister, of whom you have heard me speak," said Fanny, addressing Miss Happiman. "Shall we alight, and walk with her on the grass, as she seems disposed to be friendly?"

"By all means, my dear! You should not be at variance with your relations, if they will let you be otherwise," was the reply.

Fanny alighted, and Amanda, seeing that she was coming towards her with outstretched hand, did the same, and they met half way. Fanny rich was very different from Fanny poor, and just at that moment Amanda's pride was humbled, and she was disposed to be friendly with anyone, so gloomy were her prospects.

"I am indeed pleased to meet you," exclaimed Fanny, "for I owe all my prosperity to you."

"Indeed," said Amanda. "How is that?"

Leaving the coachmen to settle their differences, the three ladies by mutual consent walked on the soft yielding grass, under the trees, through the fern, and among the deer, and Fanny told how when dismissed from her employment she had fallen in with Mr. Happiman, who hearing her story, had adopted her and left her a fortune. She also told her sister the story of her love for Philip Dashwood, his infamous behaviour, especially in his last interview with her; and said that she had come for a drive in the country because her head ached, and her eyes burned with weeping the long night through; but that she had conquered herself at last, and Philip Dashwood was nothing to her now, she not caring more for him than she would for the voriest stranger.

Amanda listened to all this with the greatest surprise, and congratulated Fanny upon her good fortune, especially dwelling upon her luck in unmasking and exposing such an impostor as Dashwood had proved himself to be.

"I must beg your forgiveness," she went on, "for my behaviour to you the last time we met. You would not give me your confidence then, and I thought you were unworthy of being called my sister; however, that is past and gone; out of evil came good, and I hope you bear me no ill-will?"

"None whatever," Fanny hastened to exclaim, as they shook hands again. "And now," she added, "let me hear all about yourself, dear Amy, for I am

sure that your history cannot be less remarkable than my own."

"I, too, have had a fortune left me," said Amanda, whose face grew hot as she remembered the crime which had helped her to wealth; "but I am at present in great distress of mind. You must know that the present Earl of Montargis is a usurper, and if I could prove the case of the real heir to the title, I should be doing an act of justice which I am particularly anxious to perform, but I am at a standstill for several reasons, one of which is, I cannot find some people of the name of Happiman."

"It is odd," said Fanny, with a smile, "that I did not introduce you to my dear friend here, who is Miss Happiman, the sister of my kind benefactor."

"Really, that is strange," cried Amanda, bowing. "May I inquire if you are related to the Montargis family? If so, chance has served me in a truly remarkable manner."

"My poor sister married the brother of the late Earl," answered Miss Happiman.

"Do you know anything of her lost child? It is this young man whose cause I have espoused, and who is, I am firmly persuaded, the heir to the title and estates."

"This is wonderful," said Fanny. "Mr. Happiman especially enjoined us on his death-bed to do justice if possible to his sister's child, and we have made extensive enquiries respecting him, without avail."

"How strange if the man whose name is Maxwell, in whom I take such an interest, should prove to be the nephew of your friend. Could you identify the lost child in any way?"

Miss Happiman showed her a miniature likeness of the boy, which she always carried with her. Amanda thought it bore a remarkable likeness to Maxwell.

"In addition to this," Miss Happiman said, "we can produce the nurse who had the care of him up to the time of his disappearance; she can identify him by some private and peculiar mark. I have little doubt we can by our united efforts establish his claim. Two sisters meet after a long separation, they are reconciled, and a mutual exchange of confidences brings out material facts in a matter deeply interesting to both of them. But tell me, Miss Garroway, if you please, where this boy is to be seen, or I should rather say man, for the lapse of years since my sister's death must have brought him to man's estate."

"Alas! his disappearance is the cause of my grief," answered Amanda. "But you must hear the whole history of my acquaintance with Mr. Maxwell."

She proceeded to tell them how, after obtaining a situation at Montargis Park, she had overheard a conversation between the Earl and Maxwell. How she had urged his claim upon the present earl, rescued him from restraint in the lighthouse, and finally placed him with Dr. Laxton, so that he might restore his shattered health, and be able to marry her in a short time.

"The meeting with you, and the additional facts which have come to light respecting this mysterious individual," she added, "make his disappearance just now doubly distressing. I really have a liking for the poor fellow, and would gladly marry him, and that makes me the more anxious to establish his claim, for if I could raise him to the peerage, and he were my husband, I should be a countess."

Her face glowed with anticipated triumph. This admission gave Miss Happiman the key to her character, and she saw at once that she was ambitious, designing, and coldly calculating. It was to serve her own selfish ends, and not from any actual regard for Maxwell, that she wished to make his claim successful.

"We must see more of one another," said Miss Happiman, "and a strict search should be instituted without delay. If foul play is not resorted to, I am of opinion that Maxwell, or Noel as I prefer to call him, that being the name he was christened in, will come back to Dr. Laxton's. If his liberty is taken from him, or he loses his life, the case will be different, of course; and from what you tell me about the Earl of Montargis, I have great fear as to his safety."

They exchanged cards, and getting into their carriages drove back to town, after giving and receiving mutual expressions of good will and confidence.

Amanda instructed the police at Scotland Yard, and stimulated their exertions by promises of money. After doing this, she could but wait in anxious expectation for some news of the lost one.

She was convinced that at last she had stumbled upon the means of proving his case, and that if she again got possession of him she would be able to put forward a formidable claimant to the earldom of Montargis.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

Oh! ever thus from childhood's hour  
I've seen my fondest hopes decay;  
I never loved a tree or flower,  
But 'twas the first to fade away;  
I never nursed a dear gazelle,  
To glad me with its soft black eye,  
But when it came to know me well,  
And love me, it was sure to die. *L. E. L.*  
"Say, what remains when hope is fled?"  
She answered, "Endless weeping!" *Rogers.*

AFTER the rebuff he had met with at the hands of Fanny, the remainder of that terrible week dragged its slow length along, without bringing any accidental acquisition of money to cheer Philip Dashwood.

When the bill became due, the forgery could not fail to be discovered, and exemplary punishment would follow on the heels of his detection. From Fanny he had hoped much, but the astuteness of Miss Happiman had defeated all his calculations, and he was as much adrift as ever.

He had the baseness to hope for a chance of meeting some man in the set to which Fanny belonged, so that he might pour poison in his ear and damage the reputation of the woman he had wronged, and whom he now detested because she would not add to the folly of which she had been guilty, yet another folly, that of lending him money.

With a consummate effrontery born of despair, and fostered by an innate recklessness which had always distinguished him, he continued to walk about, frequent his favourite haunts, and chat with his familiar friends, until the very day on which he dreaded the detection of his fraud.

On the morning of this day, Philip Dashwood was walking along Piccadilly, smoking a cigar, dressed in the height of fashion, carrying a handsome cane in his hand, and looking as careless as if he had a thousand a year, and neither owed a debt nor had committed a wrong in the world.

He had not gone far before he met Sir Gervase Fanshawe, who stopped and spoke to him, though Dashwood, in spite of his impudence, would gladly have avoided him.

"You were asking me some questions, Dashwood, the other night when I met you out, about a girl named Garraway, who has got some money, and who lives at Lady Halliwell's. It struck me at the time that you were acquainted with her. If so, I shall be glad if you will tell me anything about her antecedents," said Sir Gervase.

"Are you interested in her?" inquired Philip, with a cunning expression.

"Well, yes. I don't mind confessing I am. She is a nice girl, and her income would go very well with mine, as I have something under four thousand a year. Not that I would ever marry for money alone; still, if a man can get a pretty girl, and some money into the bargain, and feel her heart is in the matter, it is all the better, eh?"

"Oh, certainly! Well, it happens that I do know a great deal about her, and nothing to her credit. Perhaps you will say it is not to my credit either, but my shoulders are broad enough to bear a little censure."

"What do you mean?" asked Sir Gervase, whose anxious tone testified to the interest he took in Philip's words.

"I was always a racketty dog, you know, Fanshawe, and the fact is, I deceived the girl with a mock marriage, my valet officiating as parson, and she believed herself my wife until I undid her. As for her money, she got that strangely, for she was only a farmer's daughter on my father's estate. She met some old people, a man and his sister. Their name was Happiman, I think, and the old fellow adopted her, leaving her three thousand a year—a clear three thousand per annum, on my word. I've seen the will at Doctors' Commons, paid a shilling for the express purpose. I should take care how I allowed myself to be encouraged in that quarter, I can tell you."

"Thank you for your information," answered Sir Gervase Fanshawe, with chilling coldness. "I am inclined to think all the more highly of the young lady from what you have told me, and she has my sincere sympathy, for she is undoubtedly the victim of a villain. I said a villain, sir, and you may resent the observation in any way you like."

Philip was dismayed. He thought that Sir Gervase would have thanked him for his friendly hints, and he hastened to say that he meant no offence, and did not wish to quarrel.

"You can adopt any course you choose, but I for one decline to have any further conversation with you, or to hold any communication with you," answered Sir Gervase, with which he turned haughtily and contemptuously on his heel and walked away, leaving the miserable wretch whom he had insulted, quivering with a rage he dare not show, and trem-

bling with the fear of exposure when his fraud was found out.

Sir Gervase Fanshawe proceeded to his chambers in the Albany, and found a gentleman waiting for him.

"Barton," he said, as he looked at the card his servant gave him, "I know no one of that name."

"He is inside, sir; the gentleman has been waiting this hour or more," replied the domestic.

Sir Gervase walked into his sitting-room, and saw a stout, middle-aged man engaged in reading the *Times*. He was blunt and bluff in his manner, but evidently an honest, hard-working fellow, as his horny hands testified.

"Servant, sir!" he exclaimed, rising and facing the baronet. "I'm from Hampshire, name of Barton, farmer, near Alton, and I called about your acceptance, which is due. I thought I'd present it myself."

"My acceptance!" rejoined the baronet, in surprise. "I have no bills in circulation. Be seated, if you please: there must be some mistake."

"None at all, sir. There's your name, and there's the dockyment," answered Farmer Barton.

Sir Gervase took the slip of paper and read its contents.

"Where did you get this from?" he said, without giving it back again.

"Through my son, Harry, and he got it from Mr. Philip Dashwood, a friend of his, whose name you will perceive is on it, as the drawer. Give me the dockyment, as it's valuable, representing as it does between two and three hundred pounds. I discounted it at the bank-rate, and can't afford to stand out of my money, though I might listen to terms for a renewal if you are not prepared to meet it."

"I impound this document, sir," rejoined the baronet, "because it is a forgery. I did not sign this bill, nor did I give Mr. Philip Dashwood authority to do so. You may proceed as you like, sir. I am sorry for you, but it is a forgery, and I can do nothing for you."

"A what, Sir Gervase?" exclaimed the farmer, aghast.

"A rank forgery, my good fellow."

"Bless me, who'd-a-thought it?" cried Farmer Barton. "I'll have him up for it, that I will. I'm not going to lose my money, and it seems to me that my lad has got into bad company."

"No doubt of it."

"And so you won't pay?"

"Not a halfpenny. If I owed the money, I would do so," rejoined Sir Gervase Fanshawe. "If I had authorised Mr. Dashwood to use my name I would pay, but I assure you I know nothing whatever about it, nor have I, during the whole time I have known Mr. Dashwood, had any pecuniary transactions with him."

"Very well, sir. I'm off to Bow Street, and somebody will have to suffer for this," said Barton, buttoning up his coat, and seizing his hat and umbrella with a resolute air. "There is not so much profit on pigs and corn and butter and cheese that I can afford to lose all that money; and if I can't get paid, I'll punish somebody."

"If you want the bill for the purpose of a prosecution of Mr. Dashwood, I will give it to your legal adviser. Here is my card; take this to my attorney. I will write his name on the back for you. See him before you do anything else, and I will pay your law expenses."

Farmer Barton thanked the baronet and went away. Sir Gervase put the bill in his pocket and sallied forth again. This time he went towards Belgrave, and stopped at Lady Halliwell's. He sent up his card to Fanny, and was at once shown into the drawing-room.

Miss Happiman was there. She, as we know, liked the baronet, and thought that he would make Fanny a very good husband, so after shaking hands with him, and favouring him with a sweet smile of welcome, discreetly withdrew, leaving Fanny and the baronet together.

"I have called, Miss Garraway," he exclaimed, "to talk to you upon a very delicate subject. Yet it is one upon which a man who loves a woman perhaps has a right to talk, or his love will be all his life hidden."

"And what was the nature of the subject?" asked Fanny.

"Marriage. I have known you but a short time, and, you will think, have had little opportunity of forming a correct estimate of your character, but I feel convinced that I have met with my soul's ideal in you, and that I should be supremely happy if you would consent to be my wife. Pardon this abrupt declaration. If I am unsentimental and a bad hand at making love, it is because I have never made an offer of marriage before. One learns by experience. I have had none, therefore you must forgive the shortcomings of a tyro. All I can say is I love you passionately."

Fanny coloured, but became very grave.

"I do not think I shall ever marry," she said, coldly.

"May I ask why? Have you anything to urge against me? I am no fortune hunter. I have an income of my own which is unimpaired. I am not in debt, and—"

"I am sure, Sir Gervase, that your character is in every way beyond suspicion," interrupted Fanny. "But I have two reasons for refusing your offer, much as it pains me to say so."

"May I beg you to favour me with them?" he asked, without betraying any annoyance or disappointment, but rather seeming to have expected impositions, and to be able and ready to combat them.

"I would rather you would not press me," she answered.

"Indeed I must. Forgive me for being so impudent, but I demand in justice to myself that you should give me these reasons," said Sir Gervase, firmly.

"Very well; although the confession is of a humiliating nature to me, I will admit that I have been in love, and that—"

She hesitated.

"Let me relieve you from the necessity of proceeding," replied Sir Gervase. "I know the history of your love for Mr. Dashwood, and I only wished to see if you would be candid with me."

"You know?" stammered Fanny. "From whom have you derived this knowledge?"

From Philip Dashwood himself, not an hour ago. He was base enough to enlighten me as to what he was pleased to call your antecedents."

"Indeed. I did not expect such villainy on his part," returned Fanny. "It is true that he threatened me when he found he could not induce me to marry him, and was satisfied that I had discovered how mercenary he is, but I did not think he would go to such ignoble lengths to obtain so paltry a revenge upon a woman from whom he was unsuccessful in extorting money; and you will smile at my weakness when I add that my second reason for never marrying was a lingering regard for that man."

"Was? You speak in the past tense. What am I to infer from that?"

Very anxiously he waited for her answer.

"I still feel that—that he was once very dear to me, and I could have devoted my whole life to him. Even now I should not wish any harm to come to him."

"Say so you?" cried the baronet. "Then, although I detest the man and have it in my power to transport him at this moment, I will leave him at liberty and forego the satisfaction I should have had in punishing a scoundrel."

He drew the forged bill from his pocket, where he had placed it on receiving it from Farmer Barton, and showed it to her. Then he struck a match which he saw on the mantelshelf, and holding it under the paper, slowly consumed it to ashes.

"This," he said, tossing the charred fragments from him, "was a forgery. Philip Dashwood made an illegal use of my name. I had intended to prosecute him, but to please you I have destroyed the evidence against him, and will give the man who was the holder a check upon my bankers for the amount."

Fanny gazed at him with admiration. There was something chivalrous about his generosity to one whom he was justified in considering a rival.

"If I thought I could say anything which would alter your determination to remain single, I would prolong this interview," continued Sir Gervase. "But as I fear any prolongation would only be painful to both of us—I can answer for myself—I will beg your permission to take my leave."

He took up his hat, which he had placed on a side table, and approached the door.

"Stop, Sir Gervase," exclaimed Fanny.

He halted, but did not move nearer.

"You say you know all respecting my connection with Philip Dashwood," she continued.

"All that his envenomed tongue could utter," he rejoined.

"And you still wish to make me your wife? You can still believe in a second love, and credit me when I say that I will try, oh! so hard, to be a good, faithful, and loving wife to you?"

"Oh! yes, yes—a thousand times yes!" he cried, excitedly.

"Then I am yours, and may Heaven so animate my heart that you may never have cause to repent your choice."

He sprang across the room in an instant, and caught her in his arms, straining her to his heart, and the next moment his lips were pressed to hers in a long, lingering, loving kiss.

She had promised to be his, and he would be proud to make her Lady Fanshawe.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

And hence one master-passion in the breast,  
Like Anron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

Vice is a monster of such hideous mien  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen,  
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace. *Fope.*

SOME weeks passed, and Amanda heard no news of Maxwell. The police were at fault, and Mr. Dines, who professed to aid her, was not any more successful.

She continually saw her sister, and her heart was consumed with envy when she heard that Fanny was going to be married to so eligible a man as Sir Gervase Fanshawe. She would be a baronet's wife, and consequently a lady of rank.

Miss Happiman was enchanted to think that her counsels had prevailed, and her wishes been followed, for she liked Sir Gervase, and knew that his moral character was good. Philip Dashwood was utterly discarded: although the forgery was not brought home to him, through the magnanimity of Sir Gervase, all his friends got to know about it, for the matter oozed out, and he was cut by every one he knew. His resources grew slender, and yet more slender; at last he could not get any one to give him even a dinner. He had exhausted his means utterly; he was an outcast in the streets of London; he had the impudence, which was the product of despair, to call upon Fanny and Miss Happiman, but the door was shut in his face, and as a last resource he enlisted in a foot regiment, being shortly afterwards drafted abroad to serve in the East Indies.

This fact came to Fanny's knowledge in a peculiar way. She was at a party with Miss Happiman and her future husband, when some one who had known Philip Dashwood spoke casually of his altered circumstances, saying he had once been very well off, and that he was now a private in a marching regiment. Sir Gervase looked at her steadily. She did not appear to notice the remark, but her eyes sought his with a loving expression, her lips quivered a little, and that was all. He came to her side, and tenderly pressing her hand, whispered, "my darling." Then her face grew brighter, and if he had not led her away she would have burst into tears of joy, for she knew he loved her.

Fanny believed that her sister would eventually find Maxwell, and she agreed to postpone her marriage with Sir Gervase Fanshawe for a month, to give her a chance to do so, for she said, "I should so much like both of us to be married at the same time. We will have father and mother up from Nunnipton, and John and sister Jane, and there shall be quite a merry-making, and you and I, Amy, between us, will buy back the old farm which belonged to Squire Dashwood, and father and mother shall live there again; though of course it won't be like the old days, when they had all us girls at home, still they will be very happy with John and sister Jane."

So it was arranged that Amanda and Fanny should be married on the same day, though Amanda had the difficult task to perform of finding her future husband. She was helped thereto by an accident which was of great service to her.

She happened to be at breakfast one morning at her hotel, when the waiter told her that a singular-looking man wished to see her. He did not know what his name was. Never had a name as far as he knew, though people called him something, and that something was Captain Jack. He was *h'if* a sailor, half a landsman; in fact, the waiter did *h'if* exactly know what he was like.

Amanda told the waiter to show her strange visitor up, and a singular individual, with a long beard, entered the room. He held a tarpaulin hat in his hand, and wore a pea-jacket closely buttoned. He was short and stout, and had a round face, with a rubicund nose.

"Excuse me, miss," he said, "I'm a rough sort of a customer, come all the way from Wapping, where I keep a beer-shop. My patrons are mostly sailors, and if my manners ain't suited to the West-end it's the fault of the business and a want of education."

"What do want with me?" she asked.

"Are you Miss Garraway, and is that your handwriting?" If so, we've got business together, I think. May be I'm mistaken, but Cappin Jack isn't often far wrong."

He extended a dirty-looking letter as he spoke, which she took and recognised instantly as one she had written to Maxwell when he was at Dr. Laxton's. It was written on the hotel paper, and had the name of the hotel and the address stamped on the top.

"Yes," she cried, eagerly, "it is my handwriting. Do you bring me intelligence of the person to whom it is addressed?"

"Stop a bit," said Captain Jack, laying his finger on his nose with amusing vulgarity, intending the

action to represent superior cunning on his part. "Is there any reward offered? If so, I'm the man to have it."

"If you can conduct me to the person of whom I have spoken, you shall be handsomely rewarded," answered Amanda.

"I can do it, miss. I only waited to make sure of the money, and perhaps you would not mind taking something with you, or giving it me now. Your jeweller you had best leave at home, as my customers are not particular, and the police seldom enter my house."

"How do I know you are not an impostor? I shall do nothing of the sort. You may wish to rob me, and perhaps murder me. How can I tell that I shall be safe with you?"

"I've protected the gentleman. It's true they've had all he's got, watch, rings, money, and all," answered Captain Jack. "But I've saved his life, though he is dreadful quarrelsome when he's had a drop. I believe, miss," added Captain Jack, lowering his voice to a whisper, "that the gentleman's got enemies. One or two bad characters have been trying to get hold of him since all his money and valuables have gone, and they would not do it if they were not set on. I think they'd have been one too many for me in a few days. The constant watching's been too much for me, and I couldn't have gone on, but when I asked him if he had any friends, he gave me this letter, and I came up here, seeing the address on it."

"Is he ill?" asked Amanda, anxiously.

"When a man's been drinking hard as he has for weeks, he's never very strong. His hand shakes so he can't hold a glass. He'd only a few shillings when he came to me a day or two back, but as he had been a customer, and spent some sovereigns, I took him in, for he's a decent-looking sort of a fellow, and I thought he might have good friends."

"Here are five pounds for you," said Amanda. "I don't mind risking that amount. I will treble it if I find the man I am in search of; and now go downstairs and order what refreshment you stand in need of, send for a cab, and wait, if you please, while I dress myself."

Captain Jack bowed very deferentially, pocketed the money, and walked down the grand staircase of the hotel. In a quarter of an hour a four-wheeled cab was conveying them to a low part of Wapping, near the river's edge.

Here Amanda found Maxwell, looking as usual after his excesses, a perfect wreck: he was dirty in his apparel and almost ragged, unshaven, his hair unbrushed, his face bloated, and his eyes dim and lacking lustre.

He knew her, however, and smiled faintly when she appeared.

"This is the man," she said to Captain Jack "and there are the notes I promised you. See him placed in my cab at once."

Maxwell was scarcely able to stand without assistance, but Captain Jack and a friend placed themselves one on each side of him, and raised him from the old horsehair sofa in the dingy, gin-smelling bar-parlour, where he had been lying, and assisted him into the cab, the driver of which was told to proceed at once to Dr. Laxton's, at Richmond.

Maxwell sank back in a corner and went off to sleep instantly. His condition was little above that of a beast of the field, and it was with disgust that Amanda beheld him. Still she rejoiced at having found him, and felt glad that the Earl of Montargis and his emissaries had not succeeded in doing him the mischief they evidently intended.

He had been left by the cautious and clever Mr. Dines in a low quarter of Whitechapel at twelve o'clock at night, in a state of intoxication, with all his valuables about him. Of course he fell in with swindlers on the look out for such as he, and in the course of a few weeks, during which time he was never perfectly sober, they contrived to extract from him everything he had, and they left him almost penniless at Captain Jack's ale-house, where, by the purest accident, Amanda was enabled to discover him.

"Is this the wretch?" Amanda said to herself during that long and solitary ride to Richmond, "whom I am to marry? If it were not to gratify my ambition I would leave him to his fate, but when I am his wife, his claim is established, and I am a countess, he may drink himself into his grave, without obtaining one tear of compassion from me. It is dreadful to contemplate a union with such a man."

The cab in time reached Dr. Laxton's establishment, and Maxwell was taken back to his old quarters.

Amanda had an interview with the doctor, and said:

"You must watch him night and day, for his enemies are most determined. It was only by sheer luck that I found him. I place him in your hands, doctor, and trust that you will once more make a

rational being of him, and in as short a time as possible."

"You may rely upon my very best exertions in your cause, my dear young lady," answered Dr. Laxton; "and now that I know the danger which menaces him, my most trustworthy men shall guard him. I still hope to accompany you both to church, and I am sincerely rejoiced to think that you have recovered the runaway."

Satisfied with these words, Amanda took her departure. Miss Happiman and Fanny were rejoiced beyond measure to hear of her good fortune. Maxwell rapidly recovered his health under the care of Doctor Laxton, and the marriage day was fixed at last.

But a dread spectre was ever at Amanda's side. She thought of her first crime, which was venial in comparison with the second, and the unrest which always attends upon those who shed human blood was ever dogging her footsteps.

Miss Happiman paid Maxwell several visits, and at length brought the nurse to see him. This woman was reluctant to go at first, and her conduct was considered suspicious, for Miss Happiman thought she must know something about his disappearance when a boy.

Probably she had been bribed by the Earl of Montargis to assist him in his nefarious designs. This turned out to be the fact.

The late earl had bought her a small annuity in the funds, and when pressed she confessed that she had taken the child away, and delivered it to the earl. She said the recollection of her guilt had always weighed heavily upon her, and she was glad of an opportunity of unburdening her mind, and doing justice to the man she had so deeply wronged.

By means of the mark of which we have already spoken, she identified Maxwell, and his case was considered so clear, that it was at once put in the hands of eminent counsel, and the Earl of Montargis received official notice that his title would be disputed.

The annoyance of the earl knew no bounds. He saw that he should be unable to resist the evidence which would be brought against him. Mr. Dines turned round and sold his services to the opposite party, as he might have been expected to do, and his important testimony was given on the side of Maxwell.

Every one who knew anything about the matter, considered Maxwell's claim as clear as daylight. Each day additional facts favourable to him came to light. It was regarded as only a question of time for him to take possession of the title and estates of Montargis.

Great preparations were made for the double marriage, and Amanda was able to congratulate herself upon the immediate prospect of becoming a countess.

It mattered not to her whether her husband was a man of little intellect, small culture, and occasionally of brutal habits. It was enough for her that she would realize the dream of a lifetime, and become a countess—a countess she would be—and a countess she was to be.

She had got to learn the dismal truth, that there is many a slip between the cup and the lip; and though she was sleeping or waking, haunted by an undefined dread of some untoward event, she did not suspect the actual presence of an avenging Nemesis, who was already on her track.

(To be continued.)

## FACETIE.

## TOO TRUE.

"See them two covens with the rummy 'ats on? Well, they're Parsees. That's what they call 'em; and they worships the sun!"

"Worships the sun, do they? Well, I should say they 'ad a precious easy time of it in this country!" —Punch.

## LET WELL ALONE!

"Swell—" Ah—what's your fare to Hampstead by the—a—new law?"

Cabby.—"Oh, I don't know nothin' bout no new laws, sir!—same old fare, sir—leave it to you, sir!" —Punch.

ON TAXATION.—A tax on powder is fair. Those who use powder as a luxury won't mind paying their shot for it. The tax is only on powdered footmen: babies, when powdered, don't come under the Act.—Punch.

Jones: "Poor Lucinda took that circumstance very much to heart."

Nibbles: "Did she, indeed? Dear girl! I wish I was that circumstance."

RAILWAYS are aristocrats. They teach every man to know his own station, and to stop there. An old lady who was apt to be troubled in her dreams, and was rather superstitious, informed the parson of the parish that on the night

previous she dreamed: she saw her grandmother, who had been dead for twenty years. The clergyman asked what she had been eating. "Oh, only half a mince pie." "Well, madam," said the clergyman, "if you had devoured the other half, you might probably have seen your grandfather, too."

## JONES.

Porter: "Where do you want this trunk put?" Mr. Verdant: "Why, if you will be kind enough to come along with me—that is, you keep on one side of the road and I on the other—we may meet some of our folks—Jones is the name—it's some where or other—we'll find it sure."

Porter: "Jones! Jones! I've heard of that name, I think—Jones."

## MEET.

"How are you, Jule? Been in the city all summer?"

"Yes, of course; why should I leave it?"

"Why, you owe more debts than I do, and I had to leave."

"My creditors don't annoy me—I never meet them."

"Why, how's that?"

"Well, you see, in the summer time I always walk on the sunny side of the street, and in the winter time walk on the shady side, and so I never meet them."

A STUDENT at Ann Arbor, Michigan, having remarked that men had more endurance than women, a lady present answered that she would like to see the thirteen hundred young men in the University laced up in steel-ribbed corsets, with hoops, heavy skirts, trails, high heels, panniers, chignons, and dozens of hair-pins sticking in their scalps, cooped up in the house year after year, with no exhilarating exercise, no hopes, aims, ambitions in life, and see if they could stand it as well as the girls. Nothing, said she, but the fact that women, like cats, have nine lives, enables them to survive the present regime to which custom dooms the sex.

NOT SO DUST-TEA!—Three grocers have been fined for selling "tea-dust," which consists of the sweepings of the floors of tea-warehouses. The charge cannot be said to have been too sweeping, since it was proved that the so-called tea contained 25 to 40 per cent. of foreign matters—foreign, that is to say, but not Chinese!—Fun.

CABBY'S FLAG.—In one respect this oft debated subject wears a most serious aspect. It is clear that no one can hail a cab without having (slightly altering the text of Burns) "A wee drapeau in the e'e"—Fun.

## ONE TO YOUNG KNICKERBOCKERS.

Fair Equestrienne (whose Pa has recently made the new purchase under discussion). "Well, Freddy, what do you think of my horse? you're a judge, I know."

Freddy. "Oh, he ain't altogether bad form, bar the tail. Why don't you stick him on a new one, as Aunt Nancy does her chignon?"—*Judy*.

## MY LOVE AND MY HEART.

OH, the days were ever shiny;

When I ran to meet my love;

When I pressed her hand so tiny

Through her tiny tiny glove.

Was I very deeply smitten?

Oh, I loved like anything!

But my love she is a kitten,

And my heart's a ball of string.

She was pleasingly poetic

And she loved my little rhymes!

For our tastes were sympathetic,

In the old and happy times.

Oh, the ballads I have written,

And have taught my love to sing!

But my love she is a kitten,

And my heart's a ball of string.

Would she listen to my offer,

On my knees I would impart

A sincere and ready proffer

Of my hand and of my heart.

And below her dainty mitten

I would fix a wedding ring—

But my love she is a kitten,

And my heart's a ball of string.

Take a warning, happy lover,

From the moral that I show;

Or too late you may discover

What I learned a month ago.

We are scratched or we are bitten

By the pets to whom we cling.

Oh, my love she is a kitten,

And my heart's a ball of string.

Fun.

THE LANDLORD'S GAME.—There were fifteen travellers who stopped at a public-house, and called for dinner. It was served up and placed upon a three-cornered table, five sitting on each side. They invited the landlord to dine with them. After they had finished their meal, they pro-

posed to count, commencing at some one, and count five, and whoever counted five was to leave the table, or in other words, every fifth man step out. They further agreed that the last man left was to pay the bill. They so counted as to have it fall upon the landlord. Now what seat did the man occupy who started the count?

## UNDER TWO FLAGS.

THE cab banners and the cab fares are certain to disagree. We are puzzled to discover with what show of reason the police can fall upon the so-called "crawlers," when the persecuted John can appeal to the flag-giving prescriptions of the Home Office in defence of his own loitering.—*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

## RUINS, BUT VICTORY.

'Tis very sad and terrible  
To see in ruins lie  
That which the firm-lipped might of man  
Reared to the smiling sky:  
Oh, how we shrink to hear the winds  
Rave through the mouldering halls,  
And how we sigh where ivy glooms  
Along the toppling walls!  
And how a requiem from the heart  
Moans softly ere we know—  
"Oh, Destiny, can nevermore  
The mighty Palace glow?"  
Spirit, still towers the Human Might!  
But in a little while,  
And trophies lower, grander yet,  
Will somewhere rise and smile:  
Yes, Destiny may crush a note  
That in the great march leaps,  
But never more full ruin bruis  
On crowned Man-Worker's steeps:  
The glorious music rolls along  
The river-gorge of Time,  
And will, with all the chanting spheres,  
Make its appointed chime. W. R. W.

## GEMS.

LET him who regrets the loss of time make proper use of that which is to come.

SPEAK nothing but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

WHATEVER difficulties you have to encounter be not perplexed, but think only what is right to do in the sight of Him who seeth all things, and bear without repining the result.

HAVE any wounded you with injuries, meet them with patience. Hasty words rankle the wound, kindness dresses it, forgiveness cures it, and oblivion takes away the scar.

KEEP doing, always doing. Wishing, dreaming, intending, murmuring, talking, sighing, and repining, are idle and profitless employments.

AS the rays of the sun, notwithstanding their velocity, injure not the eye, by reason of their minuteness, so the attacks of envy, notwithstanding their number, ought not to wound our virtue by reason of their insignificance.

IF anyone speak ill of thee, flee home to thy own conscience, and examine thy heart; if thou be guilty it is a just correction, if not guilty, it is a fair instruction; make use of both, so shalt thou distil honey out of gall, and of an open enemy make a secret friend.

## STATISTICS.

ADJUDICATIONS IN BANKRUPTCY.—A parliamentary return, compiled by the Chief Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy, shows that on the 11th of October last there were 10,396 adjudications of bankruptcy pending, of which 3,878 were in the London Court, 2,075 were in the provincial district courts, and 4,443 were in the county courts. Of these 10,396 adjudications there were—on petition of a creditor, 903; on petition of a debtor, 7,539; by registrars at the prisons, 1,158; on petitions in *forma pauperis*, 806; and on judgment debtor summons, 9. In 7,346 cases there was no dividend, while of the 1,695 cases in which one was declared, in 953 the dividend was under 2s. 6d. The sum of 644,403l. 18s. 6d. was the gross produce realised from the estates.

BY a Poor-law return lately issued it appears that the rateable value of property in England and Wales for the year ending Lady Day, 1869, amounts to 81,946,719<sup>l</sup>, being an increase of 2,311,274<sup>l</sup>, upon the rateable value for 1868. The gross estimated rental is 95,974,629<sup>l</sup>. Out of the 603 unions into which England and Wales were divided, the valuations under the Assessment Act have been completely revised in 593 cases. Middlesex, more perhaps from the growth of property than from the circumstances of the assessment, heads the counties with an in-

crease in its rateable value last year of 459,554<sup>l</sup>, its contributions being 5,306,064<sup>l</sup>; Lancashire comes next, with an increase of 357,736<sup>l</sup>, its amount being 7,935,295<sup>l</sup>; the West Riding of Yorkshire shows an advance of 180,575<sup>l</sup>, its rateable value being 4,981,992<sup>l</sup>; Durham, of 149,686<sup>l</sup>, its assessment being 2,502,139<sup>l</sup>; Surrey, of 146,891<sup>l</sup>, its rateable value being 2,812,310<sup>l</sup>, or less than Kent, which contributes on the value of 3,579,996<sup>l</sup>, although its increase last year is represented by only 67,056<sup>l</sup>. The other counties which show the largest increases are: Berks, 83,854<sup>l</sup>; Chester, 37,286<sup>l</sup>; Devon, 20,085<sup>l</sup>; Essex, 68,222<sup>l</sup>; Gloucester, 38,472<sup>l</sup>; Herts, 27,358<sup>l</sup>; Leicester, 27,153<sup>l</sup>; Northumberland, 58,250<sup>l</sup>; Stafford, 33,738<sup>l</sup>; and Sussex, 46,093<sup>l</sup>. Not an English county exhibits a decrease in the rateable value of its property last year, and only one Welsh (Cardigan), which declined 1,955<sup>l</sup>. There is little doubt that the increase of local taxation will be seen, when the returns come out, to be much greater in proportion than the increase in rateable value, or, in other words, grows much faster than the means of paying it.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

ACCORDING to the *London Press* there are 100,000 houses to let in the metropolis.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.—Application has been made by the French Government for plans and statements relating to the organisation of the South Kensington Museum and Schools.

LINEN MANUFACTURE.—The return of the factories engaged in flax-spinning, and the weaving of linen fabrics, and of fabrics mixed with linen, in Ireland, also, in Great Britain, recently published, shows that there are 148 so occupied in Ireland, and 287 in Great Britain; the total number of spindles being 1,638,008.

CAMBOS.—The attention of the council of the Art Union of London having been called to some of the works in cameo by Mr. Roche, and feeling the importance of encouraging this branch of art in England, they have commissioned him to produce Mr. Foley's Caractacus as a cameo in hard stone, onyx. This will form part of the prize list either this year or next, together with some cameos in shell. A few years ago the Art Union offered three premiums, for the first, second, and third best cameos, of a certain size and character, on which occasion Miss Pistrucci produced a fine work, and obtained the first premium.

THE *Newspaper Press Directory* for 1870 contains a comparison of the present position of the newspaper press with what it was in 1846. In that year there were published in the United Kingdom 551 journals; of these 14 were issued daily, viz., 12 in England and 2 in Ireland. In 1870 there are 1390 papers, of which 99 are issued daily. The magazines in course of publication, including the quarterly reviews, number 626, of which 251 are of a decidedly religious character.

THE basis of Mr. Lowe's proposals with regard to the National Debt is contained in a Parliamentary paper recently issued. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has in view to extinguish some of the small stocks, either by purchase or conversion, the formation of a new stock, terminable at the end of a century, to aid in the reduction of the National Debt, and an arrangement by which the dividends may be paid quarterly. Mr. Lowe submitted these proposals to the governors of the Bank of England and other practical bankers, whose views upon his proposals are published. They agree in thinking the payment of the dividends quarterly and the consolidation of the New and Reduced Three per Cents with Consols desirable; and Mr. Lowe has embodied these objects in a bill.

IN a return of her Majesty's embassies and missions abroad, showing the total increased charge for these services since 1851, the salaries of the British Ambassadors and Ministers, and Chargés d'Affaires, at the following courts are thus enumerated:—France, 16,000<sup>l</sup>; Turkey, 8000<sup>l</sup>; Russia, 7800<sup>l</sup>; Austria, 8000<sup>l</sup>; Prussia, 7000<sup>l</sup>; Spain, 5000<sup>l</sup>; United States, 5000<sup>l</sup>; Portugal, 4000<sup>l</sup>; Brazil, 4000<sup>l</sup>; Netherlands, 3600<sup>l</sup>; Belgium, 3480<sup>l</sup>; Italy, 5000<sup>l</sup>; Bavaria, 3600<sup>l</sup>; Denmark, 3600<sup>l</sup>; Sweden, 3000<sup>l</sup>; Greece, 3500<sup>l</sup>; Switzerland, 2500<sup>l</sup>; Wurtemberg, 2000<sup>l</sup>; Argentine Republic, 3000<sup>l</sup>; Central American Republics, 2000<sup>l</sup>; Chili, 2000<sup>l</sup>; Peru, 2000<sup>l</sup>; Columbia, 2000<sup>l</sup>; Venezuela, 2000<sup>l</sup>; Ecuador, 1400<sup>l</sup>; Coburg, 400<sup>l</sup>; Dresden, 500<sup>l</sup>; Darmstadt, 500<sup>l</sup>; Rome, 800<sup>l</sup>; Persia, 5000<sup>l</sup>; China, 6000<sup>l</sup>; and Japan, 4000<sup>l</sup>. Carlyle once made the suggestion that all this expense would be saved to the country by the simple expedient of appointing an "Own Correspondent" for the State, who should "keep his eyes open and his pen going, not too much."

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. B. S.—The note has been received.

J. T. (Margate).—The handwriting is very good, and particularly well adapted for a solicitor's office.

ROYAL SOVEREIGN.—The Latin words in *caes* and *in posse* mean in the present and in the future.

A CONSTANT READER.—Let your hair be cut very frequently and very short.

E. O. D.—The remuneration depends upon the talent displayed, about which an opinion cannot be given before perusal.

THOM.—Be temperate in your diet, take as much rest as you can, and apply to a chemist for the usual medicine.

M. J. W.—The handwriting is only moderately good. A little care and less haste in writing would much improve it.

DUNCAN.—The fees connected with the simplest divorce case are from the commencement to the conclusion seldom less than twenty guineas. Often what is supposed to be a very small matter disappoints expectation.

GARRET.—Photographs of eminent men are to be had at most of the stationers' shops. If in your town they have not the precise portraits you require, they could be ordered for you from London.

W. W. W.—The title to your lines about the funeral is inappropriate; while the construction of the verse is faulty. It will require deeper study of your model before you will be able to approach his style.

S. E. W.—We are afraid you will find some difficulty in obtaining a situation as stewardess, unless you have any seafaring connections. Make your wants known amongst tradesmen with whom the shipping interest do business.

BLANCHE P.—The marriage is legal, having been celebrated. The parents could have successfully protested against it, on account of the daughter being under twenty-one, but the ceremony having been performed, they are powerless. The question of religion is immaterial.

Mrs. G.—All wills are proved in the court of the district in which the testator resided. The will in question would therefore in the case stated be proved in Chester. A solicitor practising there could obtain a copy of it for you.

HY. W.—The Alhambra was a magnificent palace of the Moorish Kings of Spain, and erected in the thirteenth century. Ibnu'l-Alhamar was the first Moorish king who resided (1272) in the Alhambra (Kasr'l-Hamra). After the surrender of Granada (1492) by Boabdil it fell into decay.

WILD ROSE.—1. A dress ring can be worn upon any finger except the "engaged" finger. 2. A white or red camellia is a becoming flower for the hair at this time of year. 3. Wash them with lemon-juice. 4. You should not sing directly after eating or drinking. 5. Handwriting is tolerably good.

U. P.—Hull is a seaport town, London, though an inland town, is often called the Port of London—embracing as it does for the purposes of a port many miles of the river Thames. A seaport town is a town situated within a short distance of the sea, having a harbour or anchorage used by ships.

M. L.—Having stripped your ermine of all its appendages, lay it on a table, and rub it well with bran mixed with warm water. Rub with a flannel till dry. Then rub on dry bran with a piece of muslin. Then rub again with magnesia. Afterwards brush the powder off with a clean white clothes-brush.

J. H. F.—You are bound to support your wife and family. If they are relieved by the parish, the parish has a claim upon you, and would enforce it if they thought you could pay. Therefore your pension does not exempt you from your liability, from which indeed the parish may excuse you, not as a matter of right but as a favour. If you go into the house, the parish will certainly be entitled to your pension.

ANXIOUS READER.—At your age we certainly advise an abstinence from smoking. Ten years hence will be time enough for you to seek the soothing influence of tobacco. If you indulge at present you are likely to injure your constitution. Your stature appears to be small, possibly you will grow more if you make improvement in your habits.

A. B. C.—The bankrupt having settled his affairs and commenced the world afresh, can of course sue anyone who may happen to get into his debt. His old creditor, when sued, might possibly be able to plead a set off, if his agreed instalment had not been paid, but this would

depend on circumstances with which you have not acquainted us.

FAIR KATIE.—Eggs may be preserved by being placed in a mixture composed of a bushel of quicklime, two pounds of salt, and half a pound of cream of tartar; add sufficient water to render the above a thickish liquid, so that the eggs will float in it something after the manner of a float attached to a fishing line. Your bookseller would procure you a book about the management of poultry for about a shilling.

BRUM.—The greatest ironworks probably in the world are those of Creusot, in France, owned by the Messrs. Schneider. The total population dependent on the works is about 24,000, of whom 10,000 are employed in them. We decline to enter into the question of the recent strike at the works.

B. S. A.—Certainly, a strong wind would have an effect on a railway train. A difference of thirty per cent. upon the resistance of a passenger train results from a wind blowing at the rate of 27 feet per second; retarding or accelerating the speed according as it is opposed to or in the same direction as that of the train.

Mrs. Y.—If gelatine be dissolved in glycerine by aid of heat, it affords a solution that on being applied to pickle, wine, and other corked bottles, entirely excludes the air. This will answer your purpose much better than the employment of sealing-wax.

## VOID.

Gone! wholly gone! How cold and dark,  
A cheerless world of hope bereft,  
The beacon quenched, and not a spark  
In all the dull gray ashes left.

No more, no more a living part;  
In life's contending maze to own;  
Dead to its kind, an empty heart  
Feeds on itself, alone, alone!

The present but a blank, and worse,  
No ray along the future cast,  
All blighted by the blighting curse,  
Except the past, except the past.

Ay, if the cup be crushed and split,  
More than the sin, the loss I rue;  
And if the cloud was black with guilt,  
The silver light of love shone through.

And though the price be maddening pain,  
One half their raptures to restore,  
And live but half those hours again,  
I'd pay the cruel price once more.

Dreams! dreams! Not backward flows the tide  
Of life and love. It cannot be.  
Well! thine the triumph and the pride,  
The suffering and the shame for me.

W. M.

MIDDLE TEMPLE (Toulouse).—You have been imposed upon: no subscription in your name has been transmitted to us from Paris, or elsewhere. If you send your subscription for THE LONDON READER to our authorised agent in Paris, M. Madre, bookseller, 30, Rue du Croissant, the numbers will be forwarded to you regularly.

R. W. W.—The interpretation of biblical terminology or tropes is quite beside our function. The clergyman of your own or any other communion would doubtless be glad to enlighten you on the difficulty indicated. The handwriting is good, though the downstrokes are perhaps somewhat too heavy.

A. LUCAS.—A great increase of transmitted light is effected by using lamp or globe glasses made of a double thickness of glass, with an intervening hollow space, which is filled with water or other refracting fluid. The globe presents a convex form both inside and outside, and hence has the same effect on the transmitted light thrown on surrounding objects, that a convex lens would have—as, for instance, is seen in the bull's-eye lantern.

REVILLEUR.—Our rule respecting MSS. is invariable, and is stated constantly in this page. We cannot undertake to return unsuitable MSS.; neither can we judge of MSS. forwarded to us on the *ex pede Heros* principle, or by merely transmitting to us their opening and concluding passages. From the alpha and omega of the story forwarded, we should consider the subject too morbid for our pages; and it is therefore declined with thanks.

A. Y. B. H.—1. When an engagement is broken off, all the presents and letters that may have been interchanged between the parties should certainly be returned, as well as the engagement rings. 2. Marriage by licence, where the parties are under age, must not be without the consent of the father or guardian, are illegal, and may be annulled. 3. Handwriting ludically. Your other questions are answered in reply to LADY HILDA.

HENRY A.—It would be quite impossible for us to entertain a proposal for a literary engagement without having before us some evidence, either published or otherwise, of an author's ability. And as regards the postscript of your letter, the usual course would be to forward to the editor of any selected magazine the MSS. for which you desire to obtain insertion.

LADY HILDA.—1. The stones usually set in engagement rings are diamonds or pearls. 2. The most judicious age at which to marry is for a woman twenty-five, for a man thirty-five. But circumstances and inclinations have, of course, a greatly modifying influence.

J. C.—The sharp marked in the clef must always be played. Thus in the scale of E minor the F is to be played sharp, ascending and descending; but the C and D sharp marked in the scale are to be played sharp ascending only. The flat minor scales follow the same rule as the sharp minors, which is, that all notes marked flat or sharp upon the clef are to be so played always, whilst the sixth and seventh notes of the octave are played as marked in the ascending scale only.

C. E. M.—The religion of the parties to a marriage or the creed of the officiating minister has nothing to do with the validity of a marriage. Doubtless the marriage about which you write was valid. To sustain a charge of bigamy you require evidence of the two marriages, and

evidence that at the time of the second marriage the first wife was alive. If you can produce such evidence independent of the second wife, her concurrence in the prosecution is not necessary to ensure conviction.

DRESSMAKER, twenty-nine, 5ft. 6in., fond of dancing, and good looking. Respondent must have a good income. Cartes exchanged.

JOHNS B., twenty-three, in business, income 200*l.* a year. Respondent must possess a private income.

AGNES, thirty, 5ft. 4in., fair, and would make a home happy; no objection to a widower with one or two children. A tradesman preferred.

ROSE, nineteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, and affectionate. Respondent must be tall, steady, and not more than twenty-one.

LINCHETHIUM, twenty-four, good looking, in the medical profession, well connected, gentlemanly, and highly educated. Respondent must be good looking, and between eighteen and twenty-one years of age.

E. H., eighteen, tall, fair, very pretty, and loving; would make a good wife. Respondent to forward cartes.

EMILY AND ROSE.—"Emily," twenty-two, a blonde, and very pretty. "Rose," nineteen, a brunette, good looking, and accomplished. Both will have little money. Respondents should be tradesmen.

TILLIE, nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, affectionate, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark, not over twenty-one, and steady; a mechanic preferred.

LITTLE DAISY, twenty, short, fair, fresh rosy complexion, hair dressed in curls, good tempered, domesticated, and fond of music. Respondent must be tall, fair, accomplished, industrious, and about twenty-six; a native of Birmingham preferred.

ANX, twenty-three, tall, dark, gray eyes, slender figure, cheerful, affectionate, and domesticated. Respondent's age must not exceed twenty-nine, he should be tall, dark, accomplished, steady, and possess a good income.

EMILY, seventeen, good looking, musical, and domesticated. Respondent must be good looking, cheerful, and affectionate.

LOTTIE and KATE.—"Lottie," nineteen, auburn hair, blue eyes, rather tall, and good looking. Respondent must be rather tall, and dark; an architect preferred. "Kate," twenty, dark hair and eyes, medium height, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, fair complexion, and fond of home; a solicitor preferred.

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN, deep blue eyes, dark curling hair, and of an amiable disposition. Respondent must be handsome, dark eyes and hair, and have a good income; an officer in the navy preferred. Would like to exchange cartes.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

GARY is responded to by—"Ida," tall, dark, and loving; "Adelaide M.," tall, gray eyes, brown curling hair, good features, cheerful disposition, domesticated, and highly educated; and—"Mary," twenty-five, moderate height, good tempered, domesticated, and fond of music.

POLLY, whose announcement appeared in No. 333, by—"J. E.," twenty-three, 5ft. 6in., dark hair and eyes, with a loving heart, steady, and fond of home. Would like to exchange cartes.

ALFRED L.—"Lurline," seventeen, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, fair complexion, and a good pianist. Cartes exchanged.

WILLIAM S. by—"Kate P." (a tradesman's daughter), nineteen, medium height, dark hair, blue eyes, good tempered, and domesticated. Would like cartes.

FLORENCE GERALDINE by—"William," twenty, medium height, auburn hair, affectionate, an accomplished musician, and in easy circumstances. Would like to exchange addresses and cartes.

BEATRICE Ida by—"W. A. S." (a painter), twenty-four, 5ft. 6in., black hair, a heavy beard, and fond of home; and—"William Henry H.," twenty-three, 5ft. 6in., fair, good looking, educated, and steady.

MARIE and NELLIE by—"William and Harry," William twenty, 5ft. 5in., fair complexion, dark hair, blue eyes, and a good vocalist. "Harry," twenty-one, 5ft. 6in., dark, and an organist.

C. A. T. and C. H. D. by—"Emmeline and Alice." The ladies wish to know the position of the gentlemen, and would like cartes.

SAD AND LOWLY by—"Cheerful," thirty, pleasing, dark, tall, and affectionate;—"M. B.," twenty-two, medium height, good looking, good tempered, and affectionate;

"Eva," 20, medium height, black hair, hazel eyes, good pianist and singer, and domesticated;—"Louise," thirty, a widow without children, domesticated, cheerful, and affectionate;—"Adela W.," twenty-seven, tall, with dark gray eyes, brown hair, good complexion, regular features, fond of children, good tempered, educated, and accomplished. Wish to exchange cartes. And—"Sarah," twenty-eight, 5ft. 6in., good looking, and amiable; wishes for a personal interview.

G. F. by—"Frances," twenty, 5ft. 6in., dark eyes, dark curly hair, fair complexion, cheerful, affectionate, fond of music, and domesticated. Wishes "G. F." to make an appointment.

F. L. T.—There is no error. Simply you have not been responded to.

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